

Picturesque Illustrations
OF
BUENOS AYRES
AND
MONTE VIDEO,

CONSISTING OF

Twenty-four Views :

ACCOMPANIED WITH

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SCENERY.

AND OF THE

**COSTUMES, MANNERS, &c. OF THE INHABITANTS OF THOSE CITIES
AND THEIR ENVIRONS.**

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PREFACE.

THE important events of which the Spanish colonies in South America have of late years been the theatre, and the successful struggle for independence which they are still maintaining against the mother country, have powerfully attracted the attention of the whole civilized world. The political consequence of Buenos Ayres as the capital and centre of one of the newly established republics, and its importance in a commercial point of view, would render it an object of peculiar interest to the first mercantile nation in the world, even without its attempted reduction during the late war by the British arms.

Leaving, however, those more abstruse topics to the professed historian and political economist, the author of this work contented himself with sketching, originally without any view to publication, some of the characteristic features presented by the cities of Buenos Ayres and Monte Video, and such peculiarities in the habits, manners, and customs of the people as appeared to him most striking during a residence of three years in the country. These delineations will, he presumes, prove the more acceptable

to the curious, inasmuch as, to his knowledge, no graphic illustration of those places has hitherto been submitted to the public.

The descriptive part, unwarpèd by political bias, is the simple result of personal observation, with the addition of a few data derived from writers of acknowledged authority. For the benefit of the reader not conversant with the history of the colonies, a brief introductory sketch states such particulars of their settlement and subsequent fortunes as cōuld not be conveniently introduced in any other shape.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Spanish possessions in South America were formerly under the sole government of the viceroy of Peru; but some of those provinces being upwards of two thousand miles distant from Lima, his residence, sustained great inconvenience on that account; for neither could justice be distributed, nor protection afforded to their inhabitants. To remedy this evil, three other viceroyalties were at different times created; the last of them in 1778 at Buenos Ayres, comprehending the provinces of Buenos Ayres or Rio de la Plata, Paraguay, Tucuman, Las Charcas or Potosi, and Chiquito or Cuyo. This viceroyalty extended in a direct line from Cape Lobos, which may be considered as its southern limit, to the northernmost settlements on the Paraguay, upwards of sixteen hundred miles; and from Cape St. Anthony, at the mouth of the Plata, to the Cordilleras, which separate it from Chili, nearly one thousand. It embraces all the varieties of climate to be found in twenty-six degrees of latitude; being bounded on the north by the country of the independent Indians of the river of Amazons and its vicinity; on the west by Peru and Chili; on the south by Patagonia, and on the east by Brasil and the Atlantic ocean.

The province of Rio de la Plata, in which Buenos Ayres is situated, lies on both sides of the estuary of the same name, in which the mingled streams of the Parana, the Paraguay, the Uruguay, and other less considerable rivers, form a mass of fresh water not to be paralleled in the rest of the globe for width and

magnificence. Of the circumstances that led to the first colonization of this country; to the foundation of its capital, which is more particularly the subject of the succeeding sheets; and to the recent revolution which has torn it from the Spanish sceptre, a brief historical notice will not be deemed an inappropriate introduction.

Though a considerable portion of the continent of South America was explored in 1501 by Americus Vesputius, who, more fortunate than Columbus, the original discoverer, enjoyed the honour of giving his name to the whole western hemisphere; yet it would appear, that the Rio de la Plata and the countries bordering upon it were not visited by Europeans till several years later. In 1515 the court of Spain gave the command of an expedition destined to prosecute discoveries in this quarter to Juan Dias de Solis, grand pilot of Castile, who sailed from Spain in the month of September with three small vessels, one of sixty tons, and the two others of thirty each. He took on board sixty soldiers and provisions for two years and a half. On the 1st of January, 1516, he entered the river, to which he gave the name of Rio Genaro, the present Rio Janeiro of the Portuguese. Thence ranging along the coast, he came to the mouth of an immense river, which he called after his own name, Rio de Solis, an appellation subsequently changed to Rio de la Plata. He entered it, and perceiving on the north bank a number of Charrua Indians who seemed to invite him to land, he went on shore, accompanied by a few of his men. Here the whole party fell a sacrifice to the treachery of the Indians, reinforced by others who lay in ambush very near a stream that still bears the name of Solis, and is situated between Monte Video and Maldonado. The expedition having lost its commander, immediately returned to Spain, and no farther attempt at discovery was made for some years.

Meanwhile the reports of the prodigious wealth discovered by the Spaniards in Peru induced the Portuguese governor of Brasil, Don Martin de Sosa, to plan an expedition overland, with a view to share, if possible, their good fortune. For the execution of it he selected Alexis de Garcia, on whose courage and fidelity he could rely. Taking with him his son, who was very young, and three Portuguese only, Garcia reached the Paragnay, where he found a great number of Indians, and prevailed upon a large body of them to accompany him. Penetrating to the frontiers of Peru, he collected some gold and a considerable quantity of silver, with which he returned to the spot where he had been joined by the Indians, and which he thought an eligible situation for a settlement. Dispatching two of his companions to the governor of Brasil with an account of the success of his journey and of the plan he had formed, he remained himself among the Indians, with his son and the other Portuguese. No sooner had his messengers departed, than Garcia was attacked by the Indians, who murdered him and his companion, made his son a slave, and seized all his treasure. On the receipt of his dispatches, sixty Portuguese and a large party of Brasilians were sent for the purpose of joining him; but they were so harassed in their progress by the Indians, that they turned back, after losing their commander and several men, and in crossing the Parana, almost all the rest of them were drowned.

Discouraged by these untoward events, neither the Spaniards nor the Portuguese made any farther attempt at conquest or colonization in these parts, till they were visited by Sebastian Gaboto or Cabot. This navigator, who, before the conclusion of the fifteenth century, had discovered Newfoundland and part of North America for England, conceiving himself neglected in that country, had entered into the service of Spain; and after the return of Magellan from the

first circumnavigation of the globe, he was appointed to the command of a squadron of four ships, with orders to pursue the same track to the East Indies. He sailed accordingly in April 1526, and lost the largest of his ships at the island of St. Catherine. At the port of Patos, on the coast of Brasil, he found two Spaniards, who had deserted from the force commanded by Solis, and in the vicinity of that place fifteen more Spanish deserters, from the troops under Don Rodrigues d'Acunha, destined for the East Indies. All these men informed Gaboto that there was abundance of gold and silver on the Rio de la Plata. He resolved therefore to sail up that river, but as some of his officers opposed this intention, and strongly censured him for relinquishing the original object of the expedition, he put three of the most refractory on shore in the island of St. Catherine, entered the Plata, and anchored at the mouth of a rivulet, now called St. John's, opposite to Buenos Ayres. At this place he was joined by Francisco Puerto, the only one of the party that had landed with Solis who had escaped. Here Gaboto left the two largest vessels, with thirty seamen and twelve soldiers, to defend the effects which he deposited in a hut surrounded with palisades; and departed with the boats, giving orders to those who remained to seek a better harbour in the vicinity. In compliance with this command, one of the larger vessels entered the river Uruguay, but was driven on shore the third day by a tempest. The captain and some of his men were killed by the Indians; while the rest, escaping in the boat, or by swimming to shore, returned to St. John's.

Gaboto himself sailed up the southernmost branch of the river Parana, to the mouth of the Sarcaraña, where he built a brig, and erected a fort, which he called Fort Espiritu Santo, leaving in it a garrison of sixty men. He ascended the Parana to the shoals, in the latitude of 27 deg. 27 min. and then returned and entered the Paraguay, to seek certain Indians who were said to possess

abundance of gold and silver. On arriving at the mouth of the river Bermejo, he sent the brig up it with thirty men. They met with some Indians, who informed the Spaniards that they had plenty of the precious metals in their houses, which were not far distant, and that they would willingly exchange them for other articles. Deceived by this story, fifteen of the Spaniards accompanied the Indians, who surprised and massacred them all. Gaboto soon returned this blow, by attacking the Indians, killing a considerable number of them, and making a large booty in gold and silver. It is supposed that these Indians were the same who had murdered Garcia, and that their treasure was what had been brought by him from Peru. Gaboto, however, ignorant of this circumstance, considered all the precious metals as the produce of mines in the neighbourhood; and was confirmed in this idea, when some other Indians, who had entered into an alliance with him, not only supplied him with provisions, but bartered silver for Spanish commodities of trifling value. He therefore gave to this river the name of Rio de la Plata, a name which it still retains, though not the least trace of gold, silver, or any other metal, has ever been found in its vicinity.

On his return to Fort Espiritu Santo, he dispatched Ferrand Calderon to acquaint the Emperor and King of Spain, Charles V. with his discoveries and operations, and to present to his majesty the gold and silver which he had collected. The emperor was perfectly satisfied with the conduct of Gaboto, and ordered him to proceed with the conquest of the country, promising at the same time to send him the reinforcements which he solicited. As, however, the public exchequer was exhausted, and incapable of defraying the attendant expense, a commission to prosecute this conquest was given to Don Pedro de Mendoza, a very opulent inhabitant of Cadiz, who offered to undertake it at his own cost. Meanwhile Gaboto, having waited two years in vain for the

expected succours, left one hundred and ten men at *Espiritu Santo*, under the command of *Nuno de Lara*, and embarked for Spain, where he arrived in 1530.

Lara, finding himself surrounded by nations whom he was too weak to overawe, endeavoured to cultivate a good understanding with the *Timboos*, one of the nearest and most powerful tribes. His success in this attempt, however, soon involved him in unexpected destruction. *Mangora*, the cacique of the *Timboos*, in the course of the frequent visits which he paid to the fort, became enamoured of *Lucia Miranda*, wife of *Sebastian Hurtado*, one of the principal Spanish officers. It was not long before this lady discovered his passion, and knowing what she had to apprehend from a savage, with whom it was the governor's interest to be on friendly terms, she used every possible precaution to avoid being seen by *Mangora*, and to guard against any violence or surprise. The chief, on his part, devising how to get her into his power, frequently pressed *Hurtado* to pay him a visit, and to bring *Miranda* with him. Her husband, to whom she had communicated her suspicions and her fears, with a policy adapted to circumstances, declined *Mangora's* invitation, alleging that a Spaniard could not quit his post without the permission of his superior, nor could he solicit that permission except to fight and conquer his foes. The cacique was not duped by this evasion, but soon perceived that the removal of *Hurtado* was absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of his purpose.

It soon happened that *Hurtado* was detached with another officer, *Ruy Garcia Mosquera*, and fifty soldiers, to procure provisions. Considering this as a favourable opportunity, since it not only removed the husband, but weakened the force to which the wife had to look for protection, *Mangora* posted four thousand chosen men in an adjacent morass, and repaired to the fort with thirty others carrying refreshments. On his arrival, he sent word to *Lara*, that learning how

much he was distressed for provisions, he had brought a supply sufficient to serve him till the return of the detachment. The governor welcomed the treacherous chieftain with the strongest demonstrations of friendship, and insisted upon entertaining him and his attendants. Mangora, calculating upon such a reception, had given directions accordingly to his men how to behave, and concerted signals with those who were posted in the morass. The entertainment lasted till the night was far advanced; after breaking up, the Indians allowed the Spaniards sufficient time to retire to rest, and then set fire to the magazines of the fort. The Spanish officers, roused by the alarm of fire, were mostly dispatched as they rose from bed, and the rest killed in their sleep. Meanwhile the men posted in the morass were admitted into the fort, which immediately became a scene of confusion and slaughter. The governor, however, enjoyed the satisfaction of revenging himself on the perfidious chief; for though severely wounded, yet espying Mangora, he rushed upon him, and ran him through the body, but was immediately overpowered and slain by the Indians.

• Of all the Spanish inhabitants of the fort, none was spared but Miranda, the innocent cause of the fatal catastrophe, four other women, and the same number of young children. These were all bound and led before Syripo, the brother and successor of the late cacique. Syripo, at the sight of Miranda's beauty, conceived as strong a passion for her as that which had proved fatal to Mangora. He ordered her to be unbound, and relinquished the other prisoners to his attendants. He then told her not to consider herself as a captive, and solicited her favour with a gentleness that love alone could have infused into the bosom of a savage. He contrasted her husband's situation and his own—the one a fugitive in the forests of a hostile country; the other the chief of a powerful nation. Miranda's virtue, however, was proof both against persuasions

and fear; she rejected Syripo's offers with scorn, and with a degree of acrimony that was intended to exasperate and impel him to order her immediate death, by which she hoped to escape the horrors of violation. Her behaviour had a contrary effect, and only tended to strengthen the passion of the cacique, by either commanding his esteem, or enhancing the value of his anticipated conquest. He treated her with more lenity, indulgence, and regard, than could have been expected from a savage unaccustomed to control his own inclinations, or to respect female chastity.

Meanwhile Hurtado, on his return with the convoy of provisions, was astonished to find nothing but a heap of ruins where the fort had stood. He soon learned that his faithful wife was detained in captivity by the chief of the Timboos, and with a temerity prompted by conjugal affection, he immediately hastened to the place of her abode. Syripo was soon apprised of Hurtado's arrival, and enraged at his presumption, as well as actuated by inveterate hatred of the man who exclusively possessed the heart of Miranda, and was, in his opinion, the sole obstacle to his happiness, he ordered him to be instantly seized, bound to a tree, and pierced to death with arrows. Once more the power of beauty prevailed, and the earnest entreaties of Miranda won from the savage the remission of the sentence pronounced upon her husband. He was unbound, but detained as a captive. Tormented with conflicting passions, Syripo, sometimes seemed determined to sacrifice Hurtado to his jealous fury; but at others the desire of ingratiating himself with Miranda so far overcame his hatred, that Hurtado was permitted to see his wife. Their mutual visits gradually became more frequent and unrestrained, but one fatal prohibition embittered their happiness. The cacique warned them against inflaming his jealousy by indulging in conjugal endearments. Vain, however, was the voice.

of prudence, and vain were all the resolutions which they formed to abstain from the interdicted enjoyment. Restraint served only to strengthen desire, and one fatal moment plunged them into the threatened destruction. Syripo surprised them in each other's embraces, and fired with ungovernable rage at this defiance of his authority, he ordered them both to instant death; Hurtado to the punishment which he had before so narrowly escaped, and Miranda to the flames.

Mosquera, who was left in the command of the few remaining Spaniards, repaired the ruined fort; but finding that it was to no purpose to remain there, on account of the irreconcilable animosity which prevailed between the Spaniards and the Indians, he abandoned the place, and embarked with the remnant of his garrison in a small vessel that Gaboto had left behind. He first proceeded to the coast of Brasil, and afterwards removed to the island of St. Catherine, where he formed a settlement; from which, however, he was soon expelled by the Portuguese.

During these transactions, the court of Spain had not lost sight of Paraguay, and preparations were set on foot for a settlement on the Rio de la Plata, greatly surpassing any that had been made for the establishment of colonies in other parts of America. Don Pedro de Mendoza was appointed commander-in-chief of the expedition, and governor-general of all the countries that might be discovered as far as the South Sea, on condition of his transporting thither, in two voyages, at his own cost, one thousand men and one hundred horses, with arms, ammunition, and provisions for a year. He was authorized to form establishments wherever he thought proper in the lands he might discover; and was left at liberty, after a residence of three years in his government, to return to Spain and name his successor, who should be entitled to the same prerogatives as

himself. A salary of two thousand ducats a year for life was settled upon him, and he was to enjoy a certain portion of all such treasures as should fall into his hands.

Orders were issued to equip fourteen vessels at Cadiz, and Don Juan Osorio, an Italian officer, who had greatly distinguished himself in the wars in Italy, was appointed second in command under Mendoza. These extensive preparations, and the reports circulated respecting the riches of the countries contiguous to the Rio de la Plata, attracted so many persons, even from among the ancient nobility of Spain, that the first armament comprehended, instead of five hundred as originally proposed, twelve hundred men, including many Flemings and Germans. No Spanish colony, indeed, can boast of such illustrious names among its founders; and the posterity of many of them still exist in Paraguay, especially in the capital of that province. The fleet sailed in August 1534, but was dispersed by a severe storm. Some of the ships reached the islands of St. Gabriel; while the rest, with the commander-in-chief, were obliged to take refuge in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. Here Osorio was assassinated, as it was strongly suspected, at the instigation of Mendoza, whose conduct excited so much dissatisfaction, that many of his followers were preparing to leave him, when the commander, being apprized of their intention, immediately put to sea, and rejoined the other part of the fleet at the islands of St. Gabriel, since called Colonia del Sacramento.

From this station, Don Pedro sent an officer to the opposite bank to seek a convenient spot for the projected settlement, and followed himself with the whole fleet. The site of the present city of Buenos Ayres was fixed upon; here Mendoza immediately ordered the plan of a town to be traced out; the work was begun on the 2d of February, 1535, every man, without distinction, lending

his assistance, and in a short time they all had convenient habitations. A beginning was made to surround the place with walls, and at first the Guarani and Pampa Indians brought provisions, which they sold to the Spaniards. In the sequel, however, they killed ten of their number who were employed in cutting wood, and attacked the town, with the intention of destroying the new erections. In order to chastise them, Don Pedro sent against them his brother, Don Diego, with twelve captains on horseback, and one hundred and thirty foot. The second day after their departure they reached the valley of Escobar, where they perceived a body of three thousand Indians advantageously posted behind a little river and a marsh. The Spaniards attacked them; but they had scarcely proceeded a few paces, when their horses sunk up to their bellies in mud, from which it was impossible to extricate them. The enemy, with their balls, darts, and arrows, killed ten horsemen, including Don Diego, and twenty foot. A great number of Indians also perished on this occasion.

A scarcity which had for some time prevailed at Buenos Ayres became at length a dreadful famine, which occasioned the death of about two hundred of the settlers. The Indians also waylaid and destroyed all who sought the means of appeasing their hunger in the adjacent country. Hence a prohibition, under the penalty of death, was issued against any excursion beyond the limits of the garrison, and guards were posted at all the outlets to enforce its observance. Here another romantic tale is interwoven with the early history of this colony; but as, notwithstanding its improbability, it has received the sanction of the most authentic writers, no apology will be necessary for its introduction here. Be it remarked by the way, that it ought to excite no surprise, if persons, whose religion enjoined the belief of the grossest legendary absurdities, were capable

of a greater stretch of credulity in regard to the affairs of common life, than appears to us consistent with sound and sober reason. The story is as follows:

A woman, named Maldonata, having eluded the vigilance of the guards, and wandered for some time about the country, at length entered a cavern, where, to her no small dismay, she found a lioness. The animal, however, attempted no outrage upon her visitor, who soon perceived that she was on the point of littering, and in great agony. Maldonata, with a courage proportioned to her desperate situation, approached the lioness, which, with her assistance, was soon delivered of her burden. The benefit thus conferred was repaid by the grateful beast, which divided the abundant supplies of food obtained in her daily excursions, between her whelps and Maldonata. The latter continued to reside in the cavern till the cubs were capable of providing for themselves; when they disappeared, as did also the lioness, no longer attracted to the spot by maternal affection. Maldonata, therefore, was obliged to quit this asylum; and again rambling through the woods and deserts, fell in with some Indians, by whom she was made a slave. Being at length retaken by the Spaniards, she was carried back to Buenos Ayres, where Don Francisco Ruiz Galan commanded in the absence of Mendoza, who was gone on an expedition up the river in quest of some relief for the starving inhabitants. Galan was of a cruel disposition; and as Maldonata had violated the prohibition issued against straggling, he adjudged her to suffer death, and such a death as none but the most ferocious tyrant could decree. He ordered her to be taken into the country, to be bound naked to a tree, and there left to be devoured by wild beasts, or to perish with hunger. Two days afterwards, the party who had executed this barbarous order being sent to see what had become of her, found her, to their extreme astonishment, alive and unhurt, though surrounded by

wild beasts, which were deterred from attacking her by a lioness that lay at her feet. It was the same with which she had so long resided in the cavern. She related her story to the soldiers, who released and took her back to Buenos Ayres. The wonderful preservation of Maldonata on these two occasions procured her pardon from Galan, who would have been considered as opposing the will of Heaven had he attempted to enforce his cruel sentence.

A short time after this event, Mendoza being dangerously ill, embarked for Spain, leaving Galan in the command of Buenos Ayres, and appointing Don Juan de Ayolas, whom he had sent up the river to explore the country, his successor in the government, and his heir in case of his death, which happened during the voyage. Ayolas meanwhile ascended the Parana, and, after several battles with the Indians, erected a fort, which formed the commencement of the city of Assumption. Here he placed a garrison of one hundred men, and leaving his vessels under the command of Domingo Martinez de Yrala, whom he ordered to wait six months for his return, he proceeded to the north-west, into the interior of the country, with two hundred Spaniards. Ayolas penetrated into Peru, but on his return was surprised by the Payagua Indians, and cut off with all his followers. In the mean time, a confirmation of his appointment as governor-general had arrived from the emperor, with directions that, in case of his death, the original Spaniards, or the conquerors of Paraguay as they were termed, should elect his successor. Accordingly, on receiving intelligence of the unfortunate fate of Ayolas and his expedition, they chose Yrala to the vacant office.

Buenos Ayres was in the interim daily losing its inhabitants by famine. Part of them were in consequence removed to Assumption, and a proposal was made for its total abandonment. This proposal was strongly supported by the new governor, and at length determined upon. Yrala is conjectured to have

been influenced in this affair by the desire of rendering himself independent: since, on the suppression of this establishment at the mouth of the river, orders from the court of Spain could not reach him without much difficulty and delay; whilst he, being at so great a distance up the country, might easily find means of eluding them, should they prove in any respect disagreeable. Be this as it may, the resolution was immediately carried into effect; Buenos Ayres was completely evacuated in 1539, and its inhabitants were transferred to Assumption. Among these were several Italian gentlemen, whose posterity still exist in Paraguay, together with the crew of a Genoese vessel, which, having put into the Rio de la Plata with a valuable cargo, had been wrecked on a sand-bank near Buenos Ayres. On the arrival of the whole at Assumption, it was found that, out of three thousand men who had come from Spain, not more than six hundred were left.

Upwards of forty years the spot on which Buenos Ayres had stood remained uninhabited. At length, the frequent loss of ships coming from Europe, owing to the want of a safe harbour on the Rio de la Plata, rendered the Spaniards fully sensible of the policy of the re-establishment of Buenos Ayres. This measure was therefore determined on, and carried into execution in 1580 by Don Juan Garay, who settled sixty Spaniards upon the very ruins of the former town. The neighboring Indians at first annoyed the place exceedingly; but Garay succeeded in quelling their opposition. The city remained for a long time in a state of poverty, from which it gradually emerged. Its commerce began to flourish; for though its port was not opened to strangers, yet many foreign vessels from time to time put into it as if compelled by stress of weather, or upon some other pretext, were favourably received, and carried on a traffic equally profitable to themselves and the inhabitants, who, by the year 1700, had increased to sixteen thousand.

In 1740, an accession of population and prosperity accrued to this settlement, from the disasters that befel a considerable Spanish squadron which had been dispatched for the purpose of repelling the attacks of the British under Commodore Anson. Unable, however, to double Cape Horn, and buffeted by tempests, most of the ships composing it were obliged to seek refuge in the Plata in a shattered and disabled state, only one of the number being in a condition to return to Spain. The troops and crews of this squadron settled in the country, having no opportunity of leaving it, on account of the interrupted and precarious intercourse at that time existing between Spain and her colonies.

The separation of the provinces of Buenos Ayres, Paraguay, Tucuman, Los Charcas, and Cuyo, from the viceroyalty of Peru in 1778, and their erection into a separate viceroyalty, of which Buenos Ayres was made the capital, gave a fresh spring to the prosperity of the country, which the new commercial regulations adopted at the same time contributed not a little to promote.

The earliest traders to America seeking nothing but gold and silver, set no value on countries not producing those metals: apprehensive, however, lest commodities might be introduced into Peru by way of Buenos Ayres, and that this might prejudice the sale of the cargoes of the fleets and galleons which they sent to Panama, they solicited and obtained from the government the prohibition of every kind of commerce by the Rio de la Plata. Those who were most affected by this measure made strong remonstrances, and in 1602, they were permitted to export for six years in two vessels belonging to themselves, and on their own account, a certain quantity of flour, tallow, and jerked beef, but to no other ports than those of Brasil and Guinea. When the term of this permission had expired, an indefinite prolongation of it was solicited, with an extension to all kinds of merchandise, and to the Spanish ports. This applica-

tion was vehemently opposed by the consulates of Lima and Seville: nevertheless, in 1618, the inhabitants of the shores of the Rio de la Plata were authorized to fit out two vessels, not exceeding one hundred tons burden each. Several other conditions were imposed on them, and to prevent any traffic with the interior of Peru, a custom-house was established at Cordoba del Tucuman, where a duty of fifty per cent. was exacted from all imports. This custom-house was also designed to prevent the transmission of gold and silver from Peru to Buenos Ayres, even in payment for the mules furnished by the latter place. When the term of this permission had expired, it was prolonged for an indefinite period by an order of 1622; and with a view to promote the prosperity of this country, a royal audience was established in 1665 at Buenos Ayres, but again abolished as useless in 1672. Such was the general state of things, though individuals from time to time received licences to ship off cargoes of goods, till 1778, when the Rio de la Plata was thrown open to traffic of every kind, and even with the interior of Peru.

Previously to that date, no more than twelve or fifteen registered vessels were engaged in the colonial trade of all Spanish South America, and these seldom performed more than one voyage in three years. In 1796, sixty-three vessels from Old Spain alone arrived in the single port of Buenos Ayres, with cargoes valued at nearly three millions of piasters; and fifty-one sailed from it for the mother country, fourteen to the Havannah, and eleven to the coast of Africa. The value of the exports was about five millions and a half of piasters, including upwards of four millions in gold and silver.

In the succeeding years, the hostilities between Great Britain and Spain produced a material change in the state of this colony; and such was the consequent stagnation of trade, that the warehouses of Buenos Ayres and Monte

Video were filled with hides and other native productions; while many kinds of European goods rose to exorbitant prices, or were not to be procured at any rate. The people of the United States of America wisely availed themselves of this situation of affairs, and by means of a contraband traffic, carried on with the connivance of the Spanish government, they continued to supply the inhabitants of these provinces with European commodities, and to take the native productions in return, till the fortune of war placed Buenos Ayres for a short time in the hands of the British.

The circumstances attending the capture of the city of Buenos Ayres, in June 1806, by an expedition equipped at the Cape of Good Hope, under the command of Sir Home Popham and General (now Lord) Beresford, are too well known to need recapitulation. The inactivity and incapacity of the then viceroy, the Marquis de Sobre Monte, on this occasion, are severely censured by Dean Funes, the historian of Buenos Ayres, and apparently with great justice; for it does not appear that he made any attempt to defend this important city against the small British force, or to wrest it from the possession of the conquerors. This honour was reserved for Don Santiago Liniers, a Frenchman by birth, who had commanded one of the Spanish ships of war on this station. This officer, in the absence of the viceroy, who had retired to Cordoba, one hundred and sixty leagues distant from the capital, put himself at the head of all the troops he could muster on both banks of the Plata, and on the 12th. of August attacked the city on different points with such success, that the British general was obliged to surrender himself and all his troops as prisoners of war. This fortunate result occasioned the first step to that revolution which has since separated these provinces from the mother country; for the people of Buenos Ayres, indignant at the conduct of their viceroy, insisted on investing their

deliverer with the supreme civil and military authority, with the title of captain-general.

The British government, unwilling to relinquish the important commercial advantages which the possession of the banks of the Plata seemed to promise, was meanwhile engaged in preparing an armament for their effectual reduction. In February 1807, Monte Video was taken by a British force under Sir Samuel Auchmuty; and General Whitlocke, who arrived in the Plata with a still more considerable army, thought himself strong enough to attempt to regain the capital. The cool determined valour of the troops, and the energy manifested by the leaders of the several columns, in the memorable attack of the 5th of July, were, however, thwarted by the imbecility, or something worse, of the commander-in-chief, which involved the failure of the enterprise, and led to the ignominious capitulation by which he agreed to evacuate the whole of the Rio de la Plata, including Monte Video.

The unprincipled invasion of Spain by the French, and the captivity of the royal family, which very soon followed this event, were not known at Buenos Ayres till towards the end of July 1808, when an emissary from Buonaparte conveyed to Liniers his version of the transactions in the Peninsula. Liniers assembled the principal civil officers, and in their presence the letters brought by this messenger were opened and read. An extraordinary sensation was excited in the minds of all who composed the meeting. "It would be impossible," says Funes, "to communicate a just idea of the indignation produced in Liniers by a proceeding which tended to make him an accomplice in the most execrable villany, without citing his own expressions. Whilst reading these letters, he interrupted the narration with this apostrophe: 'Vile and infamous man!' alluding to Buonaparte, 'accustomed to be surrounded by

“ ‘ flatterers, the Spaniards will teach thee, that it is not the same thing to com-
 “ ‘ bat mercenary troops, and an energetic people raised to the highest pitch of
 “ ‘ indignation and patriotism. The genuine Frenchmen by whom thou
 “ ‘ acquiredst thy glory when thy wars were just, and who have submitted to
 “ ‘ thee in order to put an end to anarchy, will be the first to forsake thee,
 “ ‘ overwhelmed with shame at having beheld the throne of their legitimate
 “ ‘ sovereigns prostituted and so long occupied by a foreigner, whose immorality
 “ ‘ and baseness are as low as his birth.’ ” It was agreed that the captain-
 general should publicly make known what was passing in the mother country.
 The French emissary was ordered to re-embark immediately, and Ferdinand VII.
 was proclaimed with great rejoicings.

It was not long before the rank and popularity of Liniers began to excite the envy of Elio, then governor of Monte Video, who found means to persuade the people of the east bank to renounce their dependence on the captain-general, and to form a distinct junta, in imitation of those of Spain. His representations also filled the central junta in Europe with suspicions of the fidelity of Liniers, and Don Baltazar Hidalgo de Cisneros was appointed to supersede him.

The disastrous events which soon afterwards followed each other in rapid succession in the mother country, seemed to forebode nothing less than its complete subjugation by France. The central junta was dispersed and dissolved, after some of its members had vested their power in a regency of five persons, who addressed a proclamation to the Americans, frankly acknowledging the oppressions to which they had hitherto been subject, absolving them from any farther dependence on the Spanish government, and committing their future destiny to their own hands. These circumstances induced most of the American

provinces to establish independent governments for themselves. At Buenos Ayres, Cisneros informed the inhabitants of these events, at the same time avowing the uncertainty he felt respecting the maintenance of his own authority. The cabildo, availing itself of this declaration, petitioned him to assemble a congress, which might decide what steps ought to be taken in such a juncture. The viceroy complied with the petition of the cabildo; the congress met on the 22d May, 1810, and decided that a junta should be formed; which was accordingly done on the 25th of the same month.

The junta was opposed by the Spanish chiefs in Paraguay, who, being assisted by Cisneros, the late viceroy, planned its overthrow. Liniers also raised an army of two thousand men for the same purpose, but being deserted by his troops, he was taken in the neighbourhood of Cordoba, with several of the principal opposers of the revolution in that quarter, who were all sentenced to die, and executed accordingly. Cisneros and the members of the audiencia, being discovered to have entered into the plot, were exiled, and embarked for the Canary Islands.

Elio, who had been appointed by the regency of Spain captain-general of the provinces of Rio de la Plata, and in that capacity exercised the supreme authority in the province of Monte Video, or Banda Oriental, was now the only formidable enemy to the junta. About this time, Don Jose Artigas, a native of Monte Video, and captain in the royalist troops, having some cause of dissatisfaction with the governor of Colonia, offered his services to the junta of Buenos Ayres in the beginning of the year 1811, and obtained assistance in arms, ammunition, and troops, for the purpose of exciting insurrection on the east bank of the Plata. The command of the troops was given to Rondeau, a South-American officer, who had been made prisoner by the English at Monte

Video, and afterwards served in the war in Spain. Artigas and Rondcau several times defeated the royalists, especially in the battle of Las Piedras, in May 1811, when the Spanish troops defending La Banda Oriental were made prisoners, with their commander. The conquerors, having received reinforcements from Buenos Ayres, then laid siege to Monte Video. Elio, finding himself incapable of making a long resistance, implored succour from the Portuguese government in Brasil, which sent a force of four thousand men to Monte Video. Notwithstanding their arrival, Elio made proposals of peace to the government of Buenos Ayres, and in November 1811, it was agreed that the troops of the latter should evacuate La Banda Oriental, and that the Portuguese should retire to their own territory.

This treaty was soon broken, and the government of Buenos Ayres determined again to besiege Monte Video, where Elio had been succeeded in the command by Don G. Vigodet, who had received a reinforcement of troops from Europe. The fortress held out till June 1814, when it capitulated, on condition that the garrison should be allowed to embark for Spain. The prisoners, amounting to five thousand five hundred, were, in defiance of the articles of capitulation, distributed through the interior provinces of Rio de la Plata, Vigodet alone being permitted to embark.

A change had meanwhile taken place in the form of government. The junta of three, which had greatly retarded public affairs, was abolished by an assembly held on the 31st December, 1813, and in order to strengthen the hands of the executive power, it was vested in one person, with the title of supreme director, assisted by a council of seven members. This high office was conferred on Don Gervasio Posadas, who resigned it in January 1815, when he was succeeded by Colonel Alvear, who had commanded the army besieging Monte

Video at the time of its surrender. Of this town, Artigas demanded possession as chief of La Banda Oriental; the government of Buenos Ayres refused to give it up, and he immediately commenced hostilities. In consequence of some successes obtained by one of his officers, Colonel Soler, who had been appointed governor of Monte Video, received orders to withdraw with the remnant of his troops from the town, of which Artigas immediately took possession. Being now determined to transfer the war into the province of Buenos Ayres, he marched to Santa Fé, and made himself master of that place. The new director dispatched two thousand men under Colonel Alvarez to oppose his progress, instead of which that officer arrested Alvear, and being supported by the army and the inhabitants of the capital, compelled him to resign his authority, on which he was allowed to embark in an English frigate.

Another of those changes which are so common in popular governments now ensued. The supreme authority was vested in the municipality, who formed a junta of observation, to which it intrusted the legislative power. A new provincial constitution was published, and Rondeau was nominated supreme director; but as his military command required his presence with the army, Colonel Alvarez was appointed his deputy. Alvarez convoked a new congress of the representatives of the province, but before it could assemble he was dispossessed of his authority by a popular commotion. Don Ramon Balcarce was then appointed supreme director, but soon removed, and the administration of public affairs placed in the hands of a committee; till on the meeting of the sovereign congress in Tucuman on the 26th of March, 1816, Don Juan Martin de Pueyrredon, who is held in high estimation by his countrymen, was elected to the office of supreme director, which he still holds. On the 9th July following, the congress published the following formal declaration of independence:

“ We, the representatives of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata,
 “ assembled in a general congress, imploring the Supreme Being who presides
 “ over the universe, calling on heaven, earth, and men to witness the justice
 “ of our cause, in the name, and by the authority, of the people we represent,
 “ solemnly declare, that it is the unanimous will of the said provinces to break
 “ all the ties which united them to the kings of Spain, to be reinstated in all
 “ those rights of which they were deprived, and thus to be raised to the rank
 “ of a free and independent nation, capable henceforth of forming for itself such a
 “ government as justice and circumstances imperiously demand. We are there-
 “ fore empowered by the United Provinces at large, and by each one separately,
 “ to declare and engage that they will support this independence. Their lives,
 “ property, and fame shall be their guarantee. Out of respect for the nations
 “ whom our fate may interest, and feeling the necessity of declaring the weighty
 “ reasons which impel us thus to act, we decree that a manifesto shall be pub-
 “ lished.”

• Among the persons exiled from Buenos Ayres with Alvear in April 1815,
 there were several besides himself who encouraged the Portuguese government
 in its favourite plan for extending its American dominions to the Rio de la Plata.
 In consequence of their representations, an army of ten thousand men was as-
 sembled in Brasil, and under the command of General Lecor invaded La Banda
 Oriental on two different sides. In spite of the opposition of Artigas, who
 proved himself the steady friend of independence by his refusal of the rank of
 brigadier offered by the Spanish government to induce him to espouse the royal
 cause, Lecor reached Maldonada in December 1816, and on the 20th January
 following entered Monte Video, which is still held by the Portuguese, though
 they are greatly harassed by the guerrillas of Artigas, who occupy all the sur-

rounding country, and cut off all the supplies of provisions from the interior. With the exception of Monte Video, Artigas has possession of the whole of La Banda Oriental, which he governs independently; and a good understanding subsists between him and the congress, whose authority, after a long struggle, carried on with various vicissitudes against the royalists on the frontiers of Peru and Chili, is now acknowledged by the whole of the provinces of Rio de la Plata.

These provinces, twenty in number, are divided, according to their situation, into high and low. The former are, Moxos and Chiquitos, Apalobamba, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, La Paz, Cochahamba, Carangas, Misque, Paria, Charcas, Potosi, and Atacama; the latter, Tarija, Salta, Paraguay, Tucuman, Cordoba, Cuyo, Entrerios, Monte Video or Banda Oriental, and Buenos Ayres. The total population of this immense tract does not exceed one million three hundred thousand souls.

Since this Introduction was written, Pueyrredon has been dispossessed of the supreme directorship of the United Provinces of La Plata; and the chief authority has several times changed hands in the struggle which has ensued, and does not appear to be yet terminated.



ILLUSTRATIONS
OF
BUENOS AYRES AND MONTE VIDEO.

MONTE VIDEO,

FROM THE ANCHORAGE OUTSIDE THE HARBOUR.

On the east bank of the Rio de la Plata, one hundred miles from Cape St. Mary, its extreme east point, stands the city of MONTE VIDEO, on a small promontory, with a spacious bay on its northern side, forming a tolerable harbour for small vessels; but such as draw more than eleven feet water cannot lie there in safety. On the other side of the bay, opposite to the city, is a hill of considerable elevation, from which it takes its name. At the entrance of the river, in the rear of Maldonado, the last mountains are seen by the navigator, and with the hill of Monte Video, he takes leave of high land; the whole shore on both sides being afterwards so low, that it cannot be discovered from a ship's deck in the passage upwards, which is directed by the soundings. This hill may be seen at the distance of twelve or even sixteen leagues.

It was in 1724 that orders were issued by the court of Spain for the foundation of this place, the settlement of which was commenced in 1726, with about twenty families brought from Palma, one of the Canary Islands, by Don Bruno de Zabala, then governor of the province of Rio de la Plata. The motives of

the Spanish government in forming this establishment were, to anticipate the Portuguese, who had manifested an intention to take possession of the whole north bank of the river, and to prevent the contraband trade which was boldly carried on in these parts. Sensible of the importance of the place, the Spaniards took great pains to fortify it, and rendered it much stronger than Buenos Ayres. A wall and ditch are carried across the isthmus, on which side alone it is not surrounded by the sea; and it is defended by forts along the sea front. On a rising ground, in the centre of the isthmus, is a fort with four bastions, mounted with brass cannon, which commands the approach by the harbour, but is too distant to throw shells over the town. The barracks are said to be bomb-proof.

The town makes a handsome appearance from the harbour, being built upon an ascent, and the houses interspersed with trees and gardens. Few of the houses exceed one story: they are of stone and brick, and have flat roofs, without chimneys; the fire being generally kindled in the yard, or in a detached kitchen, and brought into the rooms in fire-pans when the weather is wet or cold. The streets are broad, and intersect each other at right angles, but they are unpaved. Near the top of the town is the market-place, about 300 yards square, and on the west a large church. There is also a convent of Cordeliers.

Monte Video is acknowledged to be an admirable station for trade, having a tolerably good harbour*, a central position for collecting produce, and the

* Azara, whose means of furnishing accurate information cannot be questioned, nevertheless asserts that this port is gradually becoming shallower, and there is reason to apprehend that it will soon be rendered unserviceable. He says, moreover, that it is exposed to violent winds, which occasion the more frequent accidents to shipping, because the bottom is a soft mud, that affords no hold for the anchors, and rots the cables and timbers.

navigation of the river so far being attended with little danger. It rose, in consequence of these advantages, to be a very flourishing place; but the political revolutions which have convulsed almost the whole of Spanish America, have involved Monte Video in ruin.

The city itself is gone to decay, and though the Portuguese, who have lately taken possession of it, are making some improvements, still, as the distracted state of the country has put an end to all commerce, the means for carrying into effect any plans for that purpose are extremely limited. There was formerly a very extensive suburb, with many elegant villas belonging to the Spanish merchants of the city; but it has been so completely desolated during the contest for independence, that some broken walls and part of a chapel are all that now remains of what once contained a population of six thousand souls. Previously to this struggle, there were fourteen thousand inhabitants within the walls; this number is now reduced to five thousand.

The country bordering on the east bank of the river, and denominated by the Spaniards, *Banda Oriental*, consists of very extensive ranges of gentle elevations. The soil forms but a scanty covering for the solid rock, that is found underneath throughout the whole tract, and furnishes the inhabitants with an excellent building material. On the heights of Maldonado and Monte Video, and on the frontiers of Brasil, in a space of perhaps one thousand square leagues, this rock is so near the surface, that there is not a sufficient depth of soil for cultivation, or for trees to take root in it. Though the country is consequently destitute of wood, yet, being somewhat diversified by the undulation of the hills, it possesses in this respect a decided superiority over the west bank. The soil in general consists of clay, of a blackish colour on the surface, from the remains of decayed vegetables; lower down it is stiffer, and of different colours

—white, red, yellow, and variegated. The first is used, diluted in water, instead of lime, to whitewash the houses in the country; and the red and yellow are employed for painting trellis-work. The yellow, if purified a little, yields a fine ochre. The jewellers of Paraguay make crucibles of the brownish yellow clay; and that of a dark colour is used for dishes and plates of very good quality, though all the baking they receive consists in filling the vessels with wood and setting fire to it.

The Rio de la Plata, at Monte Video, is fifty miles across in a direct line to Point Indio, on the west bank; the water is brackish, and in no part of the distance more than five fathoms deep.

BUENOS AYRES,

FROM THE BANK BETWEEN THE OUTER AND INNER ROADS.

BUENOS AYRES is situated on the west bank of the Rio de la Plata, above two hundred miles from its mouth. It is built upon a bank, from fifteen to twenty feet above the river, which is the general level of the country behind it; but on the border of the river to the south of the city, this bank recedes rapidly, leaving a flat marshy interval, from a quarter of a mile to four miles in breadth. To the north, the bank does not recede so far, leaving not more than half a mile of low marshy ground for the space of sixteen miles. At this distance it again approaches and overhangs the river, as at Buenos Ayres, having on its brow the pretty village of San Isidro, which is a kind of watering-place and summer residence for the citizens. Two miles farther, at another village, called the Punta, the bank suddenly leaves the river, falling back due west; and below it, as far as the eye can reach, is a flat swampy country, covered with rushes and thickets, a perfect jungle, chiefly consisting of *espinilla* (thorn), much of which is cut and sent to Buenos Ayres for fire-wood. It affords harbour to numerous panthers.

About two miles beyond the Punta, on the flat, is the village of Las Conchas, situated on a small stream, which falls into the river Luxan a little before it

joins the Plata. To this place vessels of tolerable burden can come; and here all those from Paraguay, which bring down *matté*, or Paraguay tea, wood, cordage, sail-cloth, cotton manufactures, hides and tallow, discharge their cargoes, which are carted to Buenos Ayres, and receive European commodities to return up the river. The principal reasons for the adoption of this practice, which is attended with the inconvenience of land carriage for so great a distance, are, the safety of the vessels in the port, and the security of the cargoes in loading and discharging. At Buenos Ayres, on the other hand, the anchorage is bad and open, so that in a hard gale vessels seldom hold their ground, particularly the country craft, which have cables made of the bark of a tree, that is very tough when new, but soon rots; and great delay is often experienced during rough weather, when carts are prevented from discharging the craft, which sometimes lie exposed many days on this account, and goods, when they can be removed, are often injured by the wet.

The tree from the bark of which the cables just mentioned are made, is, doubtless, the *guenbé* described by Azara; who, however, expressly asserts that this kind of cordage is not liable to rot. The *guenbé*, he says, is a parasite plant, which grows on the tops of the highest trees when they begin to decay. Its stem is about as thick as a man's arm, from three to five feet high; and there are several to each plant. It produces an ear, which exactly resembles that of maize, as well as the seeds, that are very commonly eaten, because they have a sweetish taste. From the top of the trees in which these plants have fixed themselves, they throw out straight roots, without knots, of the thickness of a finger, which sometimes fall quite perpendicularly, and at others twine round the trunk; and then strike into the ground. They are cut at the top with a knife fixed upon a reed; and their bark, which is very fine, and easily separated, is

used for making all the cables and cordage employed in the navigation of the Paraguay, without any other preparation than wetting it when dry. This cordage is cheap, never rots in water or mud, but as it is not so strong as that of hemp, it is made somewhat thicker; it is also much injured by friction. The Spanish frigates have, nevertheless, occasionally used this kind of cordage with advantage. This bark, which is of a dark violet colour, is also employed in ornamenting rush mats and baskets.

The *ybira*, another native plant, which furnishes materials for cordage, is a species of the aloe family, and produces a fruit resembling the pine-apple, but good for nothing. The leaves, which are not very thorny, are from three to five feet long, not above two inches broad, and of inconsiderable thickness. These leaves are pulled off, and dew-retted like hemp, after which, the skin that covers each side may be easily separated with the fingers, when nothing is left but the interior fibres, called *caraguata*. In this state, without any further operation, shoemakers' thread is drawn from it; or after it has been dressed a little with a comb, formed of six or eight nails, it is used for caulking vessels, in preference to hemp, because this kind of oakum never gets loose or rots in the water. From the appearance of the *caraguata*, it would be taken for hemp; and no doubt it would answer for making sail-cloth, rigging, cables, or any other articles of that kind. Azara mentions a friend of his who had a piece of rope an inch thick, made of *caraguata*, and on comparing it with another of the same dimensions made in the royal arsenals with hemp, the former was found to be the stronger of the two. He thinks that it would be scarcely flexible enough for the ropes used for working a ship, but that there can be nothing better for cables.

In the annexed view, the whole length of the city is seen extending from north to south about two miles, including the suburb. It is generally half a mile broad, and rather more in the centre.

The vessels are represented in the inner roads, which form a harbour, with commonly two fathoms water, between the shore and an extensive sand-bank, that forbids the approach of vessels requiring a greater depth, nearer than six or eight miles. Into this harbour, called the Balisas, small vessels proceed at once; but the larger discharge part of their cargoes into river craft in the outer roads, and then come into the inner, for greater security and convenience: there they take in half their loading, and return to the outer roads, whither the remainder of their cargoes is brought to them by the river craft. One of these is seen returning light over the bank; but loaded craft cannot enter the same way, for want of water, and are obliged to pass through a channel to the northward.

A British man of war's boat is shewn going in shore, as those ships always lie in the outer roads, or Amarradero, where there is excellent anchorage, and where vessels have been known to remain for a great length of time without accident. The Spanish ship of war the *Vigilant*, among others, is said to have lain here nine years.

The water at this place is always perfectly fresh, and the river thirty miles across to the nearest point on the opposite shore.

Buenos Ayres has another port, ten leagues to the south-east of the city, called the Bay of Barragon, where the king's ships used to lie before the foundation of Monte Video. It is formed by the rivulet of Santiago, which can receive vessels drawing twelve feet water, but none larger. Hither ships, after discharging the cargoes they have brought in lighters in the roads of Buenos Ayres, repair to wait for their outward cargoes.

Before Buenos Ayres became the seat of a viceroy, it was considered as the fourth city in rank in South America; but since that period it has been held as inferior to none but Lima. It has also increased rapidly, from the same circumstance, in opulence and population. It is regularly built, the streets being perfectly straight and broad, unpaved in the middle, but having footpaths on each side. The houses are supposed to amount to six thousand; and the number of inhabitants, which used to be estimated at forty thousand, is now reckoned not fewer than seventy thousand. Most of the buildings, both public and private, formerly had mud walls; but a Jesuit, who was employed to erect the church of his college, between seventy and eighty years ago, instructed the inhabitants in the art of making bricks and lime*, and the city has since assumed a very different appearance. The architecture of the cathedral, and of most of the churches, is likewise ascribed to the lay-brothers of that community, who employed the Indians under their care in the execution of these and many other public works. Thus, it is recorded that, in 1668 and the following years, five hundred of those people were engaged upon the fortifications, the port, and the cathedral of Buenos Ayres. The latter is a spacious and handsome structure, having an elegant cupola, and a portico, the design and execution of which are highly extolled. The interior is profusely decorated with carving and gilding. The dome contains paintings in compartments, representing the Acts of the Apostles. The church of the Franciscans, and that belonging to the order of Mercy, are next in rank; both have steeples and cupolas, nearly in the same style as those of the cathedral. In the former, there is a painting of the Last Supper, which is esteemed a very capital performance, considering that

* The lime of Buenos Ayres is of very bad quality, being made from shells, which are found in beds, as there is no limestone in the country.

it was executed by a native artist, an Indian convert, in one of the missions on the Uruguay. The frame is also remarkable for being composed entirely of feathers of a bright gold colour, so ingeniously put together, as to have the appearance, even to the closest observer, of the nicest carving and gilding, and it is only by the touch that the difference can be discovered. This picture was given to the Franciscans by the Jesuits, not long before their suppression. The church of St. John, on the skirts of the town, is appropriated to the use of the converted Indians. There are several convents and nunneries, and all these edifices are built of a beautifully white stone, found in a plain not far from the town. The whiteness of the public buildings is preserved and heightened by the frequency of the wind called *pampero*, which is regarded as an excellent bleacher. The principal streets are named Calle del Santa Trinidad and Calle del Victoria. The former, which faces the grand entrance to the cathedral, runs nearly the whole length of the city, and is occupied by the superior class of the inhabitants. Almost every house has a garden both before and behind, and many have latticed balconies, in which odoriferous shrubs and flowers are reared. Among the European flowers cultivated here, the carnations are the largest in the world.

The climate of Buenos Ayres is proverbial for its salubrity, as is indicated by its name. Situated between the 34th and 35th degrees of south latitude, it enjoys a temperature nearly resembling that of the southern regions of Europe. It is considered as an ordinary winter when there are but three or four days on which water is slightly frozen; it is reckoned severe when this effect is more frequent. The winds here are three times as violent as at Assumption, the capital of Paraguay; the west wind, which is scarcely known at the latter city, being probably intercepted by the Andes, though more than two hundred

leagues distant, is more common at Buenos Ayres. Here the winds are least boisterous in autumn, but stronger and more steady in spring and summer, when they raise clouds of dust; which sometimes darken the sun, and greatly incommode the inhabitants, soiling their clothes, and covering their apartments and furniture. The most violent winds are those from south-west to south-east: the latter always bring rain in winter, but not in summer. Hurricanes are rare, but they sometimes occur, as that of the 14th May, 1799, which overthrew half of the village of Atira in Paraguay, killed thirty-six persons, removed a great number of carts, and (so at least Azara tells us) tore off the head of a horse, the animal having been fastened by the neck. On the 18th September, the same year, another occurred, which stranded eight large vessels and many smaller ones on the beach off Monte Video.

In this country, the atmosphere is moist, and spoils the furniture, especially at Buenos Ayres, where the floors of rooms exposed to the south are always damp: the walls which have the same aspect are covered with moss, and that side of the roofs is overgrown with thick grass, nearly three feet high, so that it is necessary to clear them every two or three years, to prevent the water from lodging and soaking through. This humidity, however, is by no means prejudicial to health.

It seldom happens that the vapours are sufficiently condensed to form fogs; the sky is clear and serene; and it is recorded that snow never fell but once at Buenos Ayres, and then in very small quantity. This phenomenon produced the same effect upon the people of the country as rain does upon the inhabitants of Lima, who, when they go from home for the first time, are astonished at the sight of rain, which is unknown in that city. Hail is very rare; yet in the storm of the 7th of October, 1789, twelve leagues from Assumption, a shower

fell, the stones of which were three inches in diameter. The surest sign of rain is a bar which is seen fixed at the horizon in the west at sunset. A brisk north wind is an indication of rain on the day after the next. The same effect may be expected, when at night-fall lightning is observed in the south-west, when a suffocating heat is felt, and when the opposite coast is seen from Buenos Ayres.

In all seasons, but more particularly in summer, there are frequent showers of rain, accompanied with lightning; the claps of thunder follow one another with scarcely any intermission, and the sky appears to be one sheet of fire. The lightning is dangerous, especially if the storm come from the north-west. During such a storm on the 21st January, 1793, the lightning struck thirty-seven times in the interior of the city of Buenos Ayres, and killed nineteen persons.

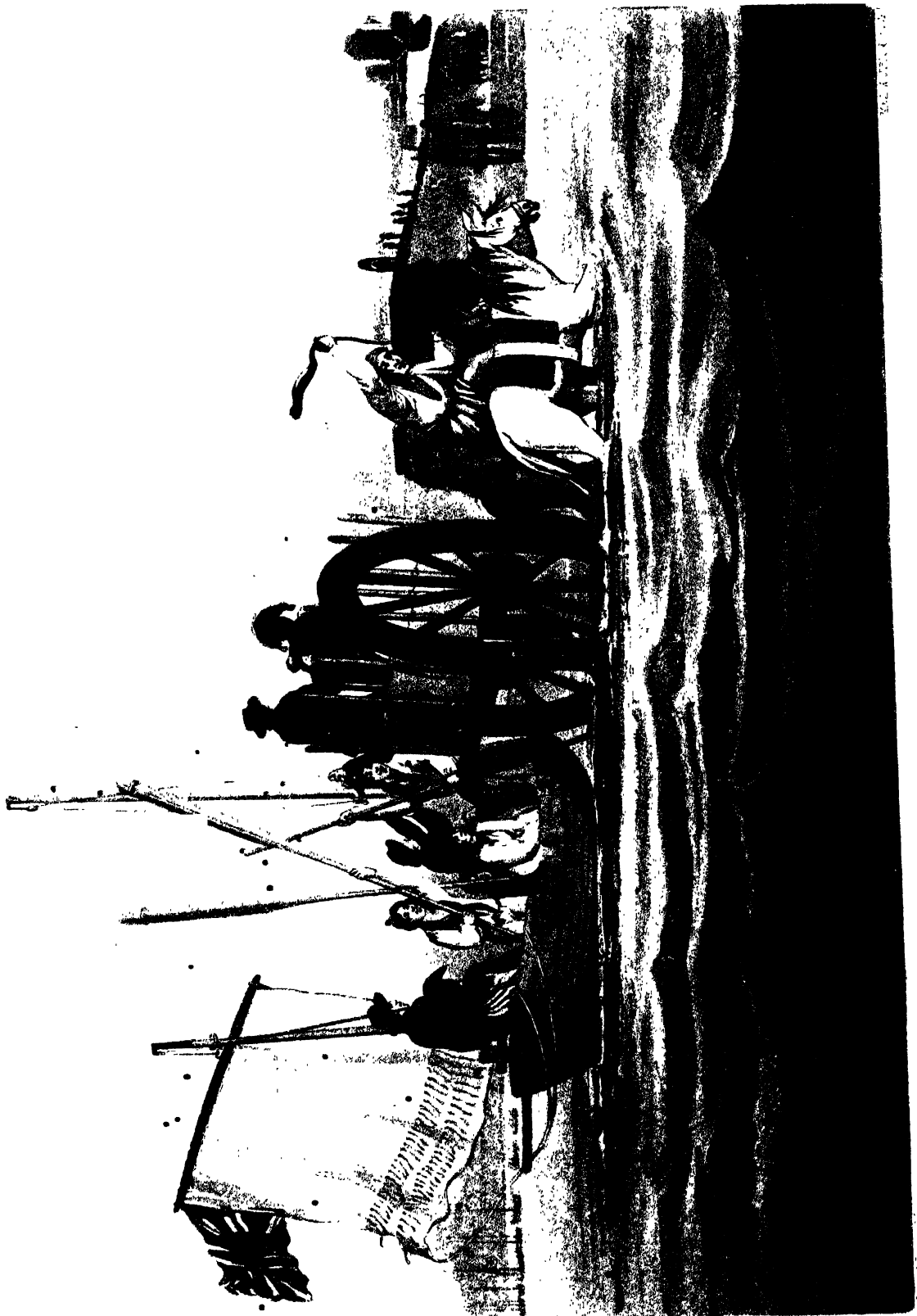
These storms, the great quantity of rain, and the violent thunder and lightning, cannot be attributed to the influence either of woods or mountains; there is not a mountain within the distance of one hundred leagues; nor is there a single tree to the south of the Rio de la Plata, or to the north as far as Paraguay, unless it be on the banks of the rivulets: hence ~~we~~ may infer, that it is the nature of the atmosphere which produces such meteors at all seasons, and much more frequently than in Europe. Notwithstanding these circumstances, there is not a more salubrious climate in the world; for the vicinity of marshes and inundated lands, which are frequently met with, has no ill effect whatever upon the health of the inhabitants.

The Spaniards who reside in the government of Buenos Ayres, proceed rather from the continual recruits that arrive from Europe, than from the intermixture with Indians, whose number has always been inconsiderable in this country; for which reason they speak the Spanish language. The cities of Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, Maldonado, Assumption, Corrientes, and Santa Fé de la Vera

Cruz, may be considered as the only Spanish towns in the extensive province of Paraguay. Though there are villages and hamlets, yet the inhabitants are not united on one spot, but live dispersed in the country in detached houses, at a great distance from one another: so that there are no other residents near the church, than perhaps the parish priest, a farrier, a shopkeeper, and a publican. Even when any of the parishioners build themselves a cottage in the village, they never make use of it but when they attend mass, or on some religious festival, after which they return to their habitations in the country. The cities above-mentioned contain about as many Spaniards as all the rest of the province. They consider themselves as beings of a far superior class to the Indians, negroes, and people of colour; and so decided is the aversion for Europeans entertained in return by the creoles, or the offspring of Spaniards born in America, that it often manifests itself between children and parents, or between husband and wife, when they happen to be natives of different hemispheres.

Among the Spaniards, as soon as a child is born, it is consigned to the charge of a mulatto, negro, or Indian nurse, who takes care of it till it attains the age of six years, or perhaps more. During that period, the child cannot see any thing worthy of imitation. Add to this a dislike of every kind of employment, which is much stronger in America than any where else, because the essence of gentility is thought to consist in doing nothing. Imbued with these principles and the notion of equality, the children of the meanest artisan disdain every kind of labour, and look upon it as beneath them to follow their father's occupation. Their chief vices are, a passion for women and gambling; and among the lowest class, drunkenness: but they possess acute perception and sound understandings; so that with the same facilities as Europeans, they would no doubt equal, if not surpass the latter. The mechanical arts are confined to

such as are absolutely indispensable ; and these are practised only by poor Spaniards from Europe, or by people of colour. The women of Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, and Maldonado, are not fond of spinning either wool or cotton; but in the other towns, females follow that employment. The customs, dress, and fashions, are much the same as in Spain; but at Buenos Ayres and Monte Video, which are the most considerable and opulent places, luxury is greater, and the domestic establishments on a larger scale.



LANDING AT BUENOS AYRES.

NEAR the centre of the city, a little to the north of the citadel, is constructed a mole of rough stone, intended for a landing-place. It is about two hundred yards long, twelve wide, and six high. Notwithstanding this projection, the river is so shoal, that boats are very seldom able to approach it, and five or six carts are constantly plying for the purpose of landing passengers. The fare is two rials, or about fifteen pence each trip, be the distance small or great: sometimes it is but a few yards, while at others the cart must go a quarter of a mile before it reaches the boats; for with northerly and north-west winds, particularly if strong, the water is driven out of the river to such a degree, that its bed is frequently dry for that distance. It has even occurred within the last ten years, that men have gone out on horseback on the bed of the river, to the distance of five miles from the shore, during a strong north-west wind; nay, it is related, on the most respectable authority, that, about twenty-five years ago, during a strong northerly wind, the water disappeared, and left an horizon of mud to the people of Buenos Ayres. Such a circumstance might happen, since the river is here *thirty miles* across, and has no more than three fathoms water in the deepest part, excepting close to the opposite shore of Colonia, where is a narrow channel of four, five, and six fathoms. A contrary effect is produced by an easterly wind, which, if violent, always raises the water at Buenos Ayres; so that in a strong gale from that quarter, the mole is sometimes

covered, with the exception of the extreme point, which is higher than the rest, and has a battery of three guns. Thus these winds, according to their direction, cause the river to rise or fall perhaps not less than seven feet. Mention is made of a phenomenon still more extraordinary, inasmuch as no satisfactory reason could be assigned for it. On one occasion, when none of those winds prevailed, the water fell to such a degree, as to recede three leagues from the shore at Buenos Ayres: in this state it remained for a whole day, and then gradually rose again to its usual height.

At the mole passengers only are allowed to be landed, all goods being taken to the custom-house, off which the craft are seen lying in the back-ground. Here, however, is also a *visguardo*, or custom-house watch-house, for the prevention of smuggling, with officers to examine persons who embark or land; especially the former, who are not allowed by the sentinel on the mole to pass, till they have presented themselves at the watch-house, and it is ascertained that they are not carrying off bullion. British officers in uniform are exempted from this search, their word of honour being deemed sufficient. •



THE FORT.

THE Fort of Buenos Ayres is a square building of brick and stone, with a dry ditch on three faces, and a drawbridge into the market-place. It is the residence of the Chief Director of the United Provinces, and the government offices are within its walls.

This view is taken from under the mole-head, on a summer evening. Behind the Fort are seen the churches of San Francisco and San Domingo, in the street formerly called del San Benito, but now named the *Street of Victory*, from the surrender of General Craufurd in the latter church.

The bank upon which the city is built here overhangs the river, and in high tides the walls of the Fort are washed by the waves: in general, however, there is a passage between it and the water.

In summer this spot is a favourite bathing-place, being the centre of the water-front of the city. Here men and women bathe promiscuously, but without scandal. The women undress on the beach in parties, leaving a servant to take care of their clothes, which they drop from under a large loose bathing-dress. As the water is very shallow, they walk out into it till it is about two feet deep, and then sit down, and wash and comb each other. From an hour before sunset till dark, thousands of females bathe here during the summer months, and afterwards walk on the beach, with their long hair hanging to dry

nearly down to the ground. Some bathe earlier, and these are accompanied by a servant, who holds an umbrella over them as a screen and shade.

The beach is covered with grassy knolls, overflowed at high water, containing numbers of little pits, which the tide leaves full, and which are the resort of washerwomen, who are to be seen at work here by hundreds every day, great holidays excepted. Each family sends a slave or two; but many of these people follow the occupation of washing for a subsistence. They not only use soap in this operation, but likewise beat the clothes with wooden mallets, and dry them on the grass.

The Fort mounts a considerable number of guns, and, with the mole, commands the anchorage of the inner roads. At the time of the capture of the city by the British troops in 1806, they found here about forty pieces of cannon, of various calibers, mounted, and two thousand stand of arms. The usual garrison was seven hundred men; and about three thousand of the provincial militia were supposed to be always in readiness to co-operate with the regulars.



W A T E R - C A R T S.

THE country round Buenos Ayres, and indeed the whole of Paraguay, may be said to form one vast plain, so level that Azara concludes from actual observation, that, in a space of upwards of six degrees, the course of the rivers of Paraguay falls no more than one foot in each marine league of latitude. One consequence of this formation is, that the country can never be watered by artificial canals, and that neither water-mills nor any other hydraulic machines can be introduced. Neither will it admit of any aqueduct for a fountain, because the water of the rivers and smaller streams has but just the fall requisite for carrying them off: no spot is perceptibly lower than another, and the whole is nearly horizontal. Buenos Ayres and other towns are situated upon rivers, and yet without the aid of steam-engines the inhabitants will never be able to conduct water into them for the purposes either of ornament or utility.

The first object, therefore, that generally strikes the eye of a stranger on landing, is a water-cart. These carts ply all day, except during the heats of summer, when they work only in the morning and evening, and the whole city is supplied by their means; for the wells, though numerous, produce nothing but bad, brackish water, unfit for culinary purposes: the number of carts is consequently considerable.

The cask is commonly a butt or puncheon, which is raised upon wheels eight feet high, to enable the carts to go deep into the water, that it may be procured as clean as possible. The bucket contains about four gallons, and four times this quantity drawn off and deposited by the driver in the yard of the house, where a cask is always kept for the purpose, costs half a rial. The piece of hide which hangs at the tail of the cart, is laid upon the ground to keep the bucket clean, while the latter is filling by means of the hose attached to the back-head of the butt.

The construction of these carts is curious, no iron being used in it. They are built of hard Paraguay wood. Three long beams and two cross ones compose the frame, which is bolted together with wooden pins. The centre beam, as in all the other carts, is long enough to serve for a pole; and to its end is lashed with hide thongs a stout cross beam, notched on each side, in the direction of the lacings by which the bullock's horns are attached to it. In this country those animals draw by the horns alone; and would to humanity this were their only suffering! Wretched beyond description is the lot of the water-cart oxen. Loaded or not, the driver sits on the beam by which they draw, and with the goad in one hand, and a large wooden mallet in the other, never ceases, in winter when the ways are bad and the mud-deep, to goad their sides and beat their horns.

May we not lay it down as an axiom, that human nature is prone to abuse every thing that a bounteous Providence has furnished in plenty for its use? In the generality of cases, it is to be feared this maxim will be found but too true; and to the present it is strictly applicable. The excessive abundance of cattle has produced a wantonness in the use, or rather abuse, of domestic animals.

that must appear almost incredible to those who have not witnessed it; thus the human being who to his fellow-man is hospitable and compassionate, is to his beast the most barbarous of tyrants. In the bad ways and deep muddy tracks to the river frequented by these carts, often do the merciless drivers make the helpless oxen bellow with their torture, using as much exertion in beating and in contrivances to urge on the wretched animals, as, added to their strength, would suffice to move the unwieldy machine out of its way; but so far from attempting to apply this remedy, the persecutor still keeps his seat on the horn-beam, and takes especial care lest his naked legs should touch the mud. . Humanity shudders at the scene; while the long habit of cruelty causes the native to stare in astonishment at a foreigner who expresses compassion, and to wonder how an ox can be the object of his notice.

The water-carts are furnished with a bell, to give notice of their approach; and in this instance, the driver has placed his saint (a doll) on the top of one of the poles.

It is not unlikely that this inconvenient mode of supplying the city with one of the prime necessities of life and health will be continued, till some enterprising Englishman shall prove the practicability of a less expensive and infinitely less troublesome method. Such a speculation, in a place like Buenos Ayres, could not fail to prove alike lucrative and honourable. In the science of hydraulics, as applied to this most useful of purposes, Britain indeed displays a pre-eminence, of which we may justly be proud; for while most of our provincial towns of any importance enjoy the comfort of a constant and abundant supply of

* It is related as a fact, that, to fill up a hole in the road, recourse is sometimes had to the expedient of killing one of a team, in order to make the passage of the wheels easier to the rest.

water, which is conducted into the very houses of their inhabitants, there is scarcely a metropolis of any other country which can boast of the like contrivance. An Englishman, Mr. B. H. Latrobe, is at this moment engaged in introducing it into the United States of America, where Philadelphia already experiences its invaluable benefits, in the mitigation, if not prevention, of the ravages of the yellow fever; and at the notoriously unhealthy town of New-Orleans, to which the above-mentioned engineer is about to transfer his operations, increased cleanliness will infallibly be attended with increased salubrity. A French writer, who has recently published a 'Tour, made in 1816 and 17, from New-York to New-Orleans, assures us, that before the foot-pavements were laid down in the latter city, the ladies were obliged to wade barefoot and barelegged through the deep mire to the assembly-rooms, each followed by a slave carrying her shoes and stockings, which, after the ball, were again taken off, and these delicate Transatlantic fair-ones returned home in the same state as they had come.

The annexed view is taken at the north end of the city, looking up the river.



THE MARKET-PLACE OF BUENOS AYRES.

THIS view is taken from the north corner of the Market-square, having a guard-house on the right, and the fort on the left next to the river. The Recova, in front, is a brick building covered with cement, and in some parts faced with stone. It is one hundred and fifty yards long, and about twenty-one wide, surrounded by a piazza, having shops within on each side. Behind, on the left, is seen the Collegio, formerly the Jesuits' college and church. The south face is a range of spirit-houses, and at the east end of them is the Beef-market, inclosed with a wall, and having shambles all round. Between the Beef-market and the fort stand the fish-carts. Vegetables and fruit are sold in front of the spirit-houses, and under the south piazza. A double line is formed from the north to the south angle by the dealers in poultry, eggs, &c.; and in the peach season, a range of carts stands between them and the piazza; under which, however, in wet weather, all who have not carts seek a sheltered station.

Ladies never go to market; gentlemen sometimes take the trouble; but in general it is left to a servant, or rather a confidential slave. Two of these are seen in the fore-ground with their provision for the day, of which two articles are remarkable—partridges and armadillos.

Of partridges there are two sorts in this country—small and large. The small differ but little from our own; the large are of the size of a pheasant, but in form, plumage, and habits, exactly correspond with the others, excepting the

bill, which is elongated, and curved so as to resemble a curlew's. This last species is never taken at a less distance than forty miles from the city; but birds of the small kind abound even close to the suburbs. Notwithstanding the distance from which the large partridges are brought, the market is always plentifully supplied with them during the first three months after Lent, before the roads become very bad.

All the partridges of this country run in pairs, and are never sprung in coveys. They get up singly, but when one is sprung, the sportsman may generally find a second. It is difficult to make them rise; the larger sort cannot be roused oftener than twice, each time taking a short flight, and then suffering themselves to be caught by hand.

The mode in which the country people take these birds is remarkable. The partridges, being used to cattle, will not rise unless turned out by man on foot, or by a dog. The countryman, therefore, who never stirs but on horseback, provides himself with a noose of twisted horse-hair, at the end of a long Paraguay cane, or bamboo. From his elevated position he sees the birds running; as he approaches, they crouch and suffer him to pass close to them, when he drops the noose over one of their heads, and raising the bamboo, secures his prize.

The market supply is not, as may be supposed, dependent on this method, but is procured by means of nets. Hide panniers, containing bushels of these birds, are brought in every day, and deposited in piles in the market-place, where the partridges are retailed, so very abundant are both sorts, the large, commonly at a rial and a half each; the small, two and sometimes three for a rial, about six or seven pence sterling.

The armadillos are brought by the Indians from a distance of forty leagues in the interior, where they are numerous, and burrow like rabbits. One of these animals, weighing from four to six pounds, generally costs two rials; they are delicious eating, very much resembling a sucking pig. Instead of hair, they are covered with a testaceous armour, which is not of one piece, but divided into several bands, joined together by membranes. They are baked in this shell, and though not very prepossessing in appearance at table, certainly look no worse than the hare, which custom has reconciled to us.

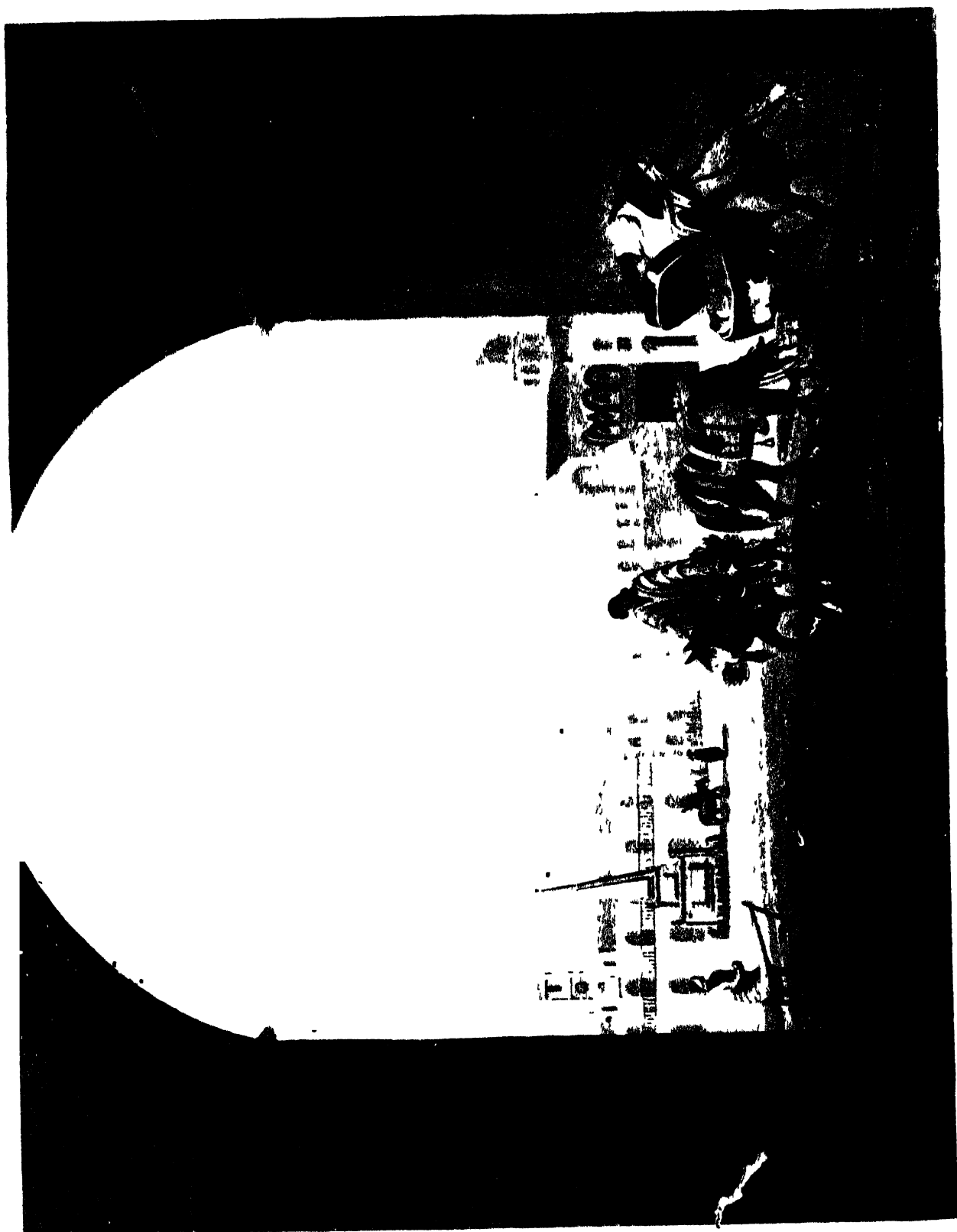
The armadillo is a harmless animal, except in gardens. He walks quickly, but can neither leap, run, nor climb trees: he has therefore no other means of escape from pursuers, than to hide himself in a hole, or if there should not happen to be any in the way, to dig one before he is overtaken; and for this purpose he requires but a few moments. He is hunted by small dogs; before they reach him, he always contracts himself into a round form, and in this state he is taken; but should he happen to be near the brink of a precipice, he escapes both dogs and hunters, by rolling down like a ball, without injury, under the protection of his coat of mail.

All vegetables are dear at Buenos Ayres, as is likewise fruit, with the exception of peaches, which, in the season, are sold from ten to sixteen for a *medio*, about three-pence. The water-melons are excellent, and the most reasonable in price of all the other kinds of fruit, which, however, are not very numerous: strawberries, grapes of many sorts, figs, apples, pears, and melons, compose the list.

Though the almond and plum-tree grow very rapidly and produce flowers here, they bear no fruit. The peach-tree in Paraguay is nearly as barren. In the province of Rio de la Plata, however, this tree yields abundance of fruit,

which is highly esteemed. Some years since, four or five species of peach-trees were brought to Buenos Ayres from Chili and other parts of America, which also produce good fruit, and which might be advantageously introduced into Europe, where they are unknown. The damson has not been long cultivated in this country. A person to whom a box of cabbage and lettuce seeds was sent from Italy, accidentally found in it two damson stones, and not knowing what they were, planted them, to see what they would produce. Such was the origin of all the trees of this kind in the province of Rio de la Plata. The pears are bad, and the cherries good for nothing: there are none in Paraguay. The apples are good at Monte Video, middling at Buenos Ayres, and in Paraguay the trees produce no fruit at all. Neither has the latter country any olive-trees, though at Buenos Ayres they thrive extremely well, and bear fruit every year. The oranges and other similar fruit are abundant, and very good.

All our common vegetables thrive at Buenos Ayres, except potatoes, which never exceed marbles in size, the soil being too stiff for them.



THE PLAZA,

OR GREAT SQUARE OF BUENOS AYRES.

THIS view of the Plaza, or great square of Buenos Ayres, is taken from under the centre arch of the Recova, described in the preceding article, which forms the east side of it. On the north are some good private houses, and the cathedral, part of which is seen. The Cabildo, or Town-hall, occupies the west side, having also a piazza. On the south is a range of mean low shops, with a broad pavement in front, on which are hucksters' stalls, with every kind of small European hardware. It was intended to continue the Recova along this side, so as to form a covered way round three sides of the square, but the plan has not been completed for want of funds.

The Cabildo is chiefly used as a prison; but there are public rooms above, where the municipal officers sometimes meet, and from the balcony in front, harangue the citizens on public occasions, and display standards or other trophies taken from their enemies. At one extremity of this building is a guard-room, and after sunset every person passing is challenged by the sentinel.

In the centre of the square is a small obelisk, erected to commemorate the declaration of the independence of Buenos Ayres and the associated provinces, and known by the appellation of the Altar of Liberty.

In this square all public processions are formed, and all public exhibitions, such as dances, fire-works, and illuminations, on days of rejoicing take place. On occasion of religious festivals, the display of gold and silver, precious stones, relics, and rarities, exceeds the most splendid exhibitions of the kind in the Catholic states of Europe. The ceremonies attending the celebration of the festival of Corpus Christi are thus described by an eyewitness:

The morning was ushered in by the ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, and other similar demonstrations of joy. At ten o'clock, upon a signal given from the governor's house, the community prepared to join in the general cavalcade, and assembled in the great square. The religious orders assembled in their respective dresses, novices, lay-brothers, and fathers, with music, choristers, banners, pictures, and precious relics. It seemed as if people from all parts of the earth were collected together, presenting every different shade of complexion, from the white and ruddy inhabitants of northern Europe, to the sable native of Guinea. The outsides of the houses round the square were hung with festoons of flowers, and live birds, tied with strings to prevent their escape, but long enough to permit them to flutter sufficiently to expand their beautiful plumage—a contrivance which had a very picturesque effect. On the firing of a volley by a party of soldiers, the whole garrison being drawn up on one side of the square, the procession commenced. The military, fully accoutred, first filed off two and two, with martial music, halting at intervals to discharge their pieces; the church-bells ringing, and the ships in the harbour saluting. Next came the religious of the order of St. Francis; then a second division of the military, and the choristers of the cathedral; these were followed by the monastic orders of St. Jago and St. Dominic; then appeared the host, borne upon a richly decorated and lofty altar, and surrounded by all the people

of the first rank in the city, superbly dressed, some of them bearing lighted tapers highly perfumed, others incense, many banners, and not a few relics; the whole flanked by soldiers on horseback, in their newest and best attire, firing alternately to the right and left; and wherever a cross appeared, which was at the end of almost every street, the cavalcade halted, to chant the service appointed for the day. After the host came another division of soldiers, followed by all the other religious of the town. The procession passed through the middle of the streets, the sides of which were thronged with the motley multitude of every complexion, of every age, and of both sexes; but, notwithstanding their numbers, all ranged in regular order, and observing a profound silence, except when they joined in the general responses of the service.

The decorations of the houses were beyond conception magnificent. Every habitation was hung either with tapestry or coloured cottons of various dyes, ornamented with feathers, festoons of flowers, and numerous and costly ornaments, and utensils of gold, silver, and jewels, all the riches of the owner being displayed on this solemn occasion. Across the streets triumphal arches stretched at intervals, composed of boughs of trees artfully interwoven, loaded with fruit, and enlivened by a great variety of living birds, suspended in cages or tied with strings. Tables covered with every kind of eatables were set out at intervals; and close to the houses were likewise placed numbers of living animals, young lions, tigers, wolves, dogs, and monkeys, carefully secured so as to prevent the possibility of their hurting the passengers. From the windows were suspended baskets, containing every variety of seed and grain, with which they meant to sow the ground, and upon which they invoked the benediction of the passing deity. The ground was strewn with herbs and flowers, in many places so regularly disposed as to resemble the most delicate carpets. When the procession reached the cathedral, the air was rent by the multitude of voices, ..

and the edifice was entered under a heavy discharge of artillery from the fort, and from the ships in the harbour, and of musketry from the soldiers in the streets. Here high mass was celebrated, and the sacrament administered with the utmost solemnity and pomp; and the cavalcade afterwards returned in the same order. The principal inhabitants and Indian caciques were invited to the governor's, where a plentiful banquet was prepared for them. The provisions exhibited in the streets were distributed by the priests among the inhabitants, who entertained all strangers that chose to partake of them. At night there was a general rejoicing, with fire-works, dancing, bull-feasts, and martial exercises.

In the annexed view, the *quinteros* (farmers) are seen coming to the market from the country, to which, on each side of the Cabildo, there are paved streets, extending about half a mile, the depth of the city in this central part. They carry their live animals, tied by the heels and thrown over their horses' backs, with just as little concern as the dead stock.

A baker's man, a negro-slave, is introduced; and here it may be observed, that slavery at Buenos Ayres is perfect freedom compared with that among other nations. On the treatment of slaves in this colony, Azara has given some particulars, that are highly honourable to the Spanish character. "Here," says he, "are none of those atrocious laws and punishments which are palliated as necessary for keeping the slaves within the bounds of their duty. The condition of these unfortunate creatures differs in no respect from that of the poorer class of whites—or, if any thing, it is better. Many of them are overseers of farms or herds of cattle, and have under them Spanish day-labourers. By far the greater number die without ever having received a single lash. They are treated with kindness; never harassed with labour; no task is set them, and they are not forsaken in their old age. The wives of their masters attend them

“ when sick. They are not prevented from marrying even free women, in order
 “ to procure the advantage of liberty for their children; they are as well, or even
 “ better, clothed than the poorer whites, and supplied with plenty of wholesome
 “ food. In short, those who would form correct ideas of the treatment of the
 “ slaves in this country, ought to have witnessed it, so totally different is it from
 “ that which they experience in the other American colonies. Here, consequently,
 “ masters will never have reason to complain of their slaves. I have seen many of
 “ them refuse liberty when offered to them, and decline accepting it till the death
 “ of their masters; and among others, not one of mine would accept it but by
 “ compulsion.” In proof of the indulgence shewn to this class of persons, the
 same writer states, as the result of an actual enumeration, that when he was in
 Paraguay, the number of the free negroes and mulattoes in the province, com-
 pared with that of the slaves, was as 174 to 100; and that the whites were to
 both as 5 to 1.

Since the declaration of the independence of these states, the condition of
 the slaves has been still farther ameliorated. One of the first laws passed by
 the Independents provided—not for the abolition of slavery, for that would only
 have thrown upon their hands a large and helpless population—but for the
 personal security of the slave. It was enacted, that any slave dissatisfied with
 his master, might, if he could find a purchaser, insist on being sold to him, at a
 price fixed by the law, which is moderate. By this regulation a good slave is
 protected from ill treatment, and a bad one is readily known, as the owner will
 sell him under the rate fixed by the law, rather than keep him.

It was farther decreed by the assembly called *Constituyente*, which met in
 January 1813, that every child born to a slave at Buenos Ayres, after that
 time should be free; and that all slaves, whether from the adjacent provinces or

any other part of the world, coming to the Rio de la Plata, should immediately receive their emancipation. The government, with a view to carry the spirit of this decree as far as possible, formed moreover a plan for manumitting a considerable number of slaves without depriving the masters of their property in them, and yet without obliging the public exchequer to pay down at once their full value. It stipulated that every proprietor of slaves should be compelled to transfer to government one out of every three slaves, whose price should be acknowledged as a debt of the state. It was agreed that the slaves so manumitted should be formed into battalions, having whites for officers, that they should be clothed and fed by the government, and be paid each half a Spanish dollar a week.

The bakers of Buenos Ayres usually have several slaves; for as there are neither wind-mills nor water-mills in the country, excepting one of the former recently erected by an Englishman, they grind the flour they use by hand and with mules. They are, in general, the richest of the citizens; for as the government derives a considerable revenue from a direct tax upon them of a certain number of dollars per month, they, in return, lay a heavy impost on the public by selling their bread at their own price.

The baker's panniers are made of hide, as indeed are most of the baskets and packages in this country. He rides a mule, many of the animals of which species are here of large size and very handsome.

The oranges which lie on the pavement are brought at the fall of the year in large quantities from Paraguay, but are not very good. Excellent lemons and some oranges are produced at Buenos Ayres in the gardens and *pateos* (courts) of the houses in and about the city, but they are not cultivated by the market-men for sale.



MILK-BOYS.

THE city of Buenos Ayres is regularly supplied with milk from the surrounding *estancias*, or farms, from one to three miles distant. It is brought on horseback in earthen or tin bottles, four and sometimes six of which are carried by each horse in hide pockets, attached to the saddle, and laced up with a piece of thong.

The milk-boys may almost be said to be born on horseback, so early are they initiated into their occupation. Most of them are children under ten years of age, so small that they are obliged to climb up their horses by means of one long stirrup, which is used for no other purpose. They sit between the jars, and in that insecure position ride most furiously. When out of the city, they run races one against another; and after they have sold their milk, may often be seen in parties gambling, or chucking rials and quarter-dollars, as among us children do farthings.

From the circumstance alone we should be induced to conclude, that this business must be exceedingly profitable. The negative assurance that the milk is not sold at a dearer rate than in London, nor is it of worse quality, will fully confirm the justice of this inference. The only wonder is, that in a country where the cows which supply the milk, where the horses which carry it to

market, and where the land which supports both, may be had for next to nothing, the price of this article should bear any comparison with that paid for it in and near the British metropolis, where rent, taxes, the cost of live stock and labour, are so immensely disproportionate. It is also a fact which cannot but excite some astonishment, that, notwithstanding this prodigious difference of circumstances, it is almost as difficult to procure milk unadulterated at Buenos Ayres as in London; for when these urchins have disposed of part of their stock, they may often be seen in the river replenishing their bottles.

These boys are generally the children of the small farmers, badly clothed and miserably dirty, but lively, and mischievous as monkeys, teaching their docile horses as many tricks as would render them worthy rivals of those animals.

Butter, or at least any thing that deserves the name, is never made by the natives of Buenos Ayres. What they principally use for the purposes to which we apply it, is the fat of beef melted into dripping, and packed in bladders like lard: this they universally denominate *manteca*—butter. Some Englishmen who have settled in the country, however, bring to market a small quantity of butter, for which they find a ready sale among the British and American residents, at the rate of six rials (about three shillings and six-pence) per pound; but this supply also fails during the heat of summer.

It is not uncommon to find in the milk sold by the boys small particles of butter produced by the motion of their gallop; and it has been gravely asserted, that the countrymen sometimes make it by tying a bladder full of cream to the horse's tail during a journey. There is reason to suspect that this is but a *jeu d'esprit*, very much, however, in character with the people at whose expense it has been played off.



THE SOUTH MATADERO,

ONE OF THE PUBLIC BUTCHERIES OF BUENOS AYRES.

AT Buenos Ayres there are four *Mataderos*, or public butcheries, one at each end, and two on the quarters of the city. .

The view is taken from the south, and looks over the centre of the city, the south end being concealed by the olive grove on the right. The contiguous suburb is rather picturesque, the *pateos* (courts) of the houses being filled with orange and lemon-trees, which appear above the walls; and small gardens, filled with those trees, figs and olives, give the place an air of cultivation, which is miserably reversed upon turning the face towards the plain at the distance of a league or two.

To a foreigner nothing can be more disgusting than the mode of supplying this place with beef. The animals are all killed in these *Mataderos* on the open ground, wet or dry, in summer covered with dust, and in winter with mud. Each *Matadero* has several *corals*, or pounds, belonging to the different butchers. Into these the beasts are driven from the country, and let out one by one, to be slaughtered, being lazoed as they come out, hamstrung, and then thrown on the ground, after which their throats are cut. In this manner the butchers slaughter as many oxen as they require, leaving the carcasses on the ground till

all are killed, when they commence the operation of flaying. When this is finished, the carcasses are cut up on the skin, which is the only protection from the bare ground, not into quarters as with us, but with an axe, into longitudinal sections across the ribs on each side of the back bone, thus dividing the carcass into three long mangled pieces, which are hung up in the carts, and carried, exposed to dust and filth, to the beef-market within the Plaza.

All the offal is scattered over the ground, and as a high-road leads across each of the Mataderos, this would be an intolerable nuisance, especially in summer, were it not for the flocks of carrion-birds, which devour every thing, and pick all the bones that are left as clean as possible, in less than an hour after the departure of the carts. A few privileged hogs share with the carrion-birds what remains on the ground; and herds of swine are always kept close to the Mataderos, and fed entirely on the bullocks' heads and livers. Nothing can be more disgusting than the appearance of the corals where these beasts are kept; indeed so revolting is it, that all foreigners at this place become Jews, in so far at least as regards the abhorrence of swine's flesh.

As the mode of lazoing is exhibited in the sketch, some description of it may be expected. The word *lazo* signifies a noose; and it is literally a noose that is used on this occasion. The lazo is an inch rope made of platted strips of hide, kept supple with grease. To one extremity is attached a strong iron ring, through which the other end is passed, and fastened to the girth of the saddle. This rope, about twelve yards long, is held in coils in one hand, while the noose, lengthened to the convenience of the thrower, is in the other. On approaching the bullock, the noose is whirled round the head with a twist of the hand to prevent its entangling, and presently thrown, to its full extent, loose and round over the horns or any part that is desired, the thrower being so sure

of his mouth that he will catch the animal by the horns, or any one of his legs, or his tail if he pleases. Great quickness of eye is required to draw the noose tight at the proper moment.

In this manner the wild cattle in the plains of the Pampas, and also those belonging to the westerly (goatsuck) tribes, are caught and killed. While the horses are so trained, that when the beast is once fast, the horse will keep the noose tight, and prevent his running, while the rider dismounts and kills him. At the farms three persons are often engaged in this business. One of them rides in among the cattle, and selecting a beast, throws his lasso over his horns, and gallops away till the rope is run out. The second is then ready with his noose, and watching the opportunity of the beast kicking and struggling, he entangles one of the hind legs. Both the horses immediately draw the ropes tight in opposite directions, and hold them so firmly that the beast is unable to move. A third man then comes up, hamstring the hind leg that is not secured, upon which the animal immediately falls, and his throat is cut. Though to a stranger this may appear a tedious process, it is performed by experienced persons in four or five minutes.

Another method of killing cattle in the public butcheries is this: A machine with a pulley and which is erected at the extremity of the inclosure. The horns of a bullock are entangled in a rope attached to this machine, by which he is drawn forward till his head passes through an opening in the paling, where a man, provided with a strong dagger, stabs the beast between the horns in the pith of the neck, which occasions almost instantaneous death.

By means of the lasso they also catch horses, as well those that run wild as the tame. It is very rarely indeed that they miss their aim, though going at full speed; and a man, however cautious, can no more avoid being taken by

the lazo, than the animals which they hunt. It is used by the straggling robbers, who sometimes infest the roads at a distance from towns. In an open country, the only resource which a man has in such a case is, to throw himself on the ground, keeping his legs and arms as close to it as possible, that no room may be left for the rope to get underneath them. Among trees or underwood, the noose is less dangerous; and by a rapid approach to the robber, before he has time to throw the lazo, his dexterity may also be foiled. This rope is so strong that, though not thicker than one's little finger, it will hold the wildest bull, when his efforts to escape would break a hempen rope of much larger dimensions.

The carrion-bird, which renders such important services by devouring the large quantities of offal and animal relics that would otherwise taint the atmosphere, is a species of gull, with yellow bill and feet, blue back and shoulders, and the rest of the body beautifully white. These birds not only frequent the butcheries of Monte Video and Buenos Ayres, but also the public places of those cities, picking up such offal as they can find. They are likewise seen in immense numbers on the beach, when the waves have cast upon it the carcase of a whale or other fish. Sometimes too they will leave the coast, and proceed so far as one hundred leagues into the interior, attracted by carcasses and heaps of flesh, which are left to spoil in the fields and savannahs.

The *iribú*, or vulture, another carrion-bird, is very common in Paraguay, though it is not met with beyond the parallel of Buenos Ayres. It is known from tradition, that at the time of the conquest, and even long afterwards, this bird was not found at Monte Video, but that it followed vessels to that part of the country. It is asserted that it does not build a nest, but deposits two white eggs in holes in rocks or trees. M. de Azara informs us, that, for more than a

year, he had opportunities of observing an iribu which was kept in a house: it was extremely tame, could distinguish its master, and would accompany him in excursions of eight or ten leagues, flying over his head, and sometimes settling on his carriage. It always came when called, and never joined others of its species to feed; neither would it eat but from the hand, nor touch any meat that was not cut into very small pieces. Another iribu, which was likewise tame, accompanied its master on journeys of more than a hundred leagues to Monte Video; but when it perceived that he was taking the road home, it would hasten before him, and thus announce to its mistress the return of her husband.

This bird passes the greatest part of the day upon trees or palisades, watching for some person to throw out fragments of meat, or to kill a sheep. In general, several of the iribus assemble on the same tree; and as they are never molested, they live every where in peace and security. If any noise or object frightens them when they are assembled upon carrion, they all at once set up a cry of *hu* in a nasal tone, and it is the only one they ever utter. Whether single or in company, they never attack or harass any animal; and when several of them fall upon a dead one of small size, each strives to tear off a piece as well as he can, without quarrelling with his companions. They begin by devouring the eyes, then the tongue, and such of the intestines as they can draw out. If the animal has a very strong hide, and a dog, or some other carnivorous beast, has not begun upon it, they leave it after they have plucked out the parts above-mentioned; but if they find any opening, they devour all the flesh to the very bones, which they leave covered with the skin alone. They sometimes follow travellers and vessels, and live upon the offal and filth that are thrown away. When wounded, they cast up all that they have swallowed.

The head and neck of the iribu are bare and wrinkled; the whole of the plumage is black, excepting the quills of the first six wing-feathers, which are white: its total length is about two feet, including the tail, which measures from six to seven inches.

There is another species of bird in this country, which is not less greedy of carrion than the iribu. The *caracara* will not only fall upon dead carcasses, but if he perceives a vulture about to swallow a piece of flesh, will follow him till he has dropped his repast. Four or five of these birds will sometimes join in the pursuit of prey, and it is generally believed, that in this manner they will kill ostriches and fawns. In sheepfolds that are not guarded by a dog, a single caracara will devour the umbilical cord and tear out the intestines of the newly dropped lamb.



F I S H E R M E N.

THIS view is taken about a mile to the north of the city, looking up the river.

The quantity of fish consumed in Buenos Ayres is considerable, and the mode of catching it remarkable. Notwithstanding the extensive demand, not a boat is employed, the whole being caught by horses. Every evening in the winter, and early in the morning also in the summer, the fishermen repair to the river with a cart drawn by oxen, and two horses, with a net coiled on the back of one of them. There are generally four men in each party; one mounts each of the horses, and both set out together, walking their horses abreast into the river as far as they can, generally a quarter of a mile, and sometimes swimming them, when the men stand on their backs. When they are at the deepest, the horses are turned right and left, and separate, stretching the net to its fullest extent, from sixty to eighty yards; and then turning in shore, they draw it gradually after them to the beach. They usually take great quantities of fish; but there is no more than one sort that can be called good, and that only by comparison with the rest; for they are all very inferior to those taken lower down the river at Monte Video, where the water is clear, deep, and brackish, not as here, shoal and muddy. The principal species are,

The *Boga*, of the carp kind, which is the most common: it usually weighs three or four pounds; is soft, bony, and ill-flavoured. The inhabitants lay in a large stock of it salted and dried.

The *Suruvi*, cat-fish, resembles the pike, but has teeth in the gills only. The skin is smooth, of a white ash colour, spotted like a tiger with large round black spots. Fish of this kind, weighing from sixty to one hundred pounds, are sometimes left on shore by high tides, but when taken in the nets, they are commonly from ten to thirty pounds. They are called *cat-fish* from having long filaments, like whiskers, on each side of the snout. Their flavour is very oily.

The *Dorado*, gold-fish, resembles the salmon in shape, but is rather shorter in proportion to its bulk. It is a ravenous fish, with a mouth full of strong teeth, and weighs from twenty to thirty pounds. It makes a brilliant appearance: the eyes, placed on each side of the head, are large, and surrounded with circles of shining gold; the back is enamelled with spots of a bluish green and silver; and the tail and fins are of a gold colour. The flesh is soft and bony.

The *Pejerey*, or king-fish, in shape and colour resembles a smelt, but is sometimes of three pounds weight, though generally of the size of mackarel, and weighing less than one. This is the best fish usually taken. The *pejereys* abound in the Plata. In the month of July, when the Parana is at the highest, they ascend that river in vast shoals, for the purpose of spawning in the smaller streams that fall into it. The fishermen catch them with hooks in large numbers, and sell them not only fresh but also dried. They must be dried without salt, which would instantly spoil them; and for the same reason great care must be taken, after they are hung up to dry, to prevent the access of any moisture.

Grey mullet are frequently taken, but they are not very good.

The *Mungrullu* is the largest fish found in the Plata, some of them weighing a hundred weight.

The *Palometa* is a small broad flat fish, with very sharp fins, with which it wounds those who incautiously lay hold of it. The wound is liable to fester, and to become so inflamed as to produce convulsions, which sometimes terminate in tetanus and death. It has also very sharp teeth, with which it can take out a piece in a moment: hence it is necessary for persons bathing to be on their guard against it. Azara mentions a monk who lost in this manner the distinctive marks of his sex.

The *Armado*, a thick strong fish, with a short body, generally weighing from four to six pounds. Nature having denied it teeth for defence, seems to have compensated the deficiency, by bestowing weapons and armour of an extraordinary kind. Thus, the whole fish is covered with hard thick bone, excepting a small part of the belly; and the back, sides, and fins are armed with strong sharp points, which are so fixed in sockets, that the fish can turn them in any direction.

The *Rayas*, or rays, nearly three quarters of a yard in length, have the mouth in the middle of the belly. From the root of the tail, on the back, grows a sharp-pointed bone, with two edges, rough like a saw with small teeth. The wounds inflicted by this bone on those who approach too near or tread upon it, are often attended with fatal consequences.

Several other species are occasionally caught; one of these, a kind of bream, of large size, is good. It is said that in the clear deep waters of the upper rivers, are found great quantities of excellent fish, of totally different species from those taken below.

The *boga* is always cut open down the back at the water-side, and packed in layers on rushes in the cart by the two assistants, while the horsemen prepare for a second trip. The other kinds of fish are carried into the city whole, and the larger sold piecemeal in the market-place from the carts, being hung up by the tail, and slices cut off the sides, as required by the purchasers, without scale or weights, the use of which would be thought much too troublesome. The oily *suruvi* is the greatest favourite.

There is little doubt that much better fish might be procured by employing boats to go out into deeper water, or by sending them up the river towards Paraguay; but at Buenos Ayres, luxury of the table consists in profusion. So little indeed is delicacy regarded, that the cultivator takes no pains to rear the finer fruits and vegetables; because the common articles, produced by the bounty of nature without care or culture, are preferred at a low price, to the finer sorts at a higher rate.

Azara makes mention of a singular kind of crab here, called *cangrejo*, which in colour, size, and flavour, resembles that of Europe. It is never found either on the banks or in the neighbourhood of any river or stream, but only in places distant from both, beyond the reach even of inundations. These animals make a circular and perpendicular hole in the ground, always in clay, but never in a sandy soil; this hole they scoop out of sufficient dimensions to hold a male and female, with a certain quantity of rain water, for they neither know nor seek any other. They leave these haunts at night, and often fall a prey to various animals, especially the *aguara-guazu*, or cougar of Buffon. It is extremely dangerous to gallop in the plains where these crabs have dug their holes, as the horses' legs sink into them to the depth of twelve inches, and the animals of course are liable to be thrown down.



CHURCH OF SAN DOMINGO,

AND

FEMALE COSTUMES.

THE church of San Domingo, with its dependent monastery, occupies a whole *quadra*, one hundred and fifty yards square, and is an object of curiosity, as the place where the British General Craufurd was cooped up, and obliged to surrender, on occasion of the disastrous attempt to recover the city made on the unfortunate 5th of July, 1807; although, had he known it, there is a back way into the Water-street, by which he might have gained the Residencia, covered from the fire of the fort. The adventures of Craufurd's division on that fatal day are thus related in the recent publication of the *Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment*, which formed a part of it:

The town and suburbs are built in squares of about one hundred and forty yards on each side; and all the houses are flat on the top, for the use of the inhabitants, who go upon them to enjoy the cool of the evening. These we were told they meant to occupy with their slaves, and fire down upon us as we charged through the streets. We remained under arms on the morning of the 5th of July, waiting the order to advance. Judge our astonishment when the word was given to march without ammunition, with fixed bayonets

“ only!—‘ We are betrayed!’ was whispered through the ranks.—‘ Mind your
 “ duty, my lads! Onwards! onwards! Britain for ever!’ were the last words I
 “ heard our noble Captain Brookman utter. He fell as we entered the town.
 “ Onwards we rushed, carrying every thing before us, scrambling over ditches,
 “ and other impediments which the inhabitants had placed in our way. At
 “ the corner of every street, and flanking all the ditches, they had placed can-
 “ non, that thinned our ranks every step we took. Still onwards we drove, up
 “ one street, and down another, until we came to the church of St. Domingo,
 “ where the colours of the 71st regiment had been placed as a trophy over the
 “ shrine of the Virgin Mary. We made a rush into it, and took them from
 “ that disgraceful resting-place, where they had remained ever since the sur-
 “ render of General Beresford to Liniers. Now we were going to sally out in
 “ triumph. The Spaniards had not been idle. The entrances of the church
 “ were barricaded, and cannon placed at each entrance. We were forced to
 “ surrender, and were marched to prison. It was there I first learned the com-
 “ plete failure of our enterprise.

“ During the time we were charging through the streets, many of our men
 “ made sallies into the houses in search of plunder, and many were encumbered
 “ with it at the time of our surrender. One sergeant of the 38th had made a
 “ longish hole in his wooden canteen, like that over the money-drawer in the
 “ counter of a retail shop; into it he slipped all the money he could lay his
 “ hands on. As he came out of a house he had been ransacking, he was shot
 “ through the head. In his fall the canteen burst, and a great many doubloons
 “ ran in all directions on the street. Then commenced a scramble for the
 “ money, and about eighteen men were shot grasping at the gold they were
 “ never to enjoy. They even snatched it from their dying companions, although

“ they themselves were to be in the same situation the next moment. We
 “ were all searched, and every article that was Spanish taken from us; but we
 “ were allowed to keep the rest. During the search, one soldier, who had a
 “ good many doubloons, put them into his camp-kettle, with flesh and water
 “ above them, placed all upon a fire, and kept them safe.

“ There were about one hundred of us who had been taken in the church
 “ marched out of prison to be shot, unless we produced a gold crucifix of great
 “ value that was missing. We stood in a large circle of Spaniards and Indians.
 “ Their levelled pieces and savage looks gave us little to hope, unless the cruci-
 “ fix were produced. It was found on the ground on the spot where we stood,
 “ but it was not known who had taken it. The troops retired, and we were
 “ allowed to go back to prison without further molestation*.”

Funes, in his *History of Paraguay, Buenos Ayres, and Tucuman*, published at Buenos Ayres in 1816, complains bitterly of the outrages committed by the British troops, both on the property and persons of the friars of the convent of San Domingo; and if, as he relates, one of them was killed, and two dangerously wounded, it was probably in defending the valuable emblems of their faith, such as the crucifix above-mentioned, from the rapacious hands of our soldiers. They had probably forgotten, that, on such occasions, the church militant generally establishes its claim to the character of church triumphant also.

In commemoration of the surrender of General Craufurd, the colours are suspended in this church; and the anniversary of our defeat is celebrated at Buenos Ayres by a grand *fonccion*, with processions, high mass, and other solemnities.

* *Journal of a Soldier of the 71st, or Glasgow Regiment Highland Light Infantry, from 1806 to 1815.* 2d Edition, p. 40-44.

The church of San Domingo is in a state of dilapidation, and has nothing within worthy of note besides the colours and a good organ. The Dominicans carefully preserve on its remaining tower a number of marks, which they say were made, as well by round shot as musket-balls, in the attack on the British troops. They doubtless conclude, that their patron saint stood with his back against, and supported it; for nothing short of such a miracle could have prevented its overthrow, had only *six* of the shot taken effect, instead of *six hundred*.

In the fore-ground are exhibited the varieties of church and street costume. An English traveller who visited Buenos Ayres some years ago, has drawn a lively picture of the female fashions of that time. The usual dress of the ladies was of light silk and fine cotton, with a profusion of lace, which rather displayed than concealed the contour of the bosom. No head-dress or cap confined their long and flowing black hair. A petticoat, that scarcely descended below the knee, was lengthened by folds of deep lace, which seldom hid from view even the gold fringe of their tasseled garters. At their assemblies, a petticoat of various-coloured taffeta, ornamented with gold lace or fringe, and richly tasseled, though falling to the feet, was calculated either to conceal or to discover at intervals the shape of the leg, encircled by a silk stocking, with a fanciful display of gold embroidery. Slippers of embroidered silk or gold brocade, with diamond buckles or clasps, and very high heels, which were sometimes of solid silver, adorned the feet. A kind of jacket of rich velvet, fitted tight to the shape, was laced or buttoned in front, and had long points hanging down all round the petticoat, and trimmed at the ends with pearl tassels. A cloak of gauze, or very fine cotton, reaching to the ground, and occasionally fastened to the side by a clasp of jewels, was thrown over the shoulders, which would otherwise have been uncovered; and the luxuriance of the bosom was hidden

only by the innumerable trinkets, jewels, necklaces, and crosses. The principal of these ornaments was a large oval or circular gold plate, in the middle, connected with a broad ribbon passing over the shoulders and under the arms, and forming a sash round the waist. A head-dress, consisting either of a handkerchief of gold gauze with braids of diamonds, or of chains of gold, twisted in and out of their shining black hair, completed the attire of ceremony of ladies of quality.

Within these few years, however, the ladies of Buenos Ayres have adopted a style of dress between the English and French, retaining indeed the mantilla, which still gives it a peculiar character. No hat or bonnet is ever seen on a native lady, unless she be on horseback, when she wears a beaver hat and feather, with a riding-habit.

The *mantilla* is usually a piece of silk, about half a yard wide in the middle, and a yard and a half long, sloping to a point at each end, which is terminated by a tassel. It is worn over the head and back of the neck, and being brought over the shoulders, the ends hang down in front. No brooch or pin is used to secure it; but it is artfully and gracefully confined under the chin by one hand, or by the end of the fan, without which no woman ever stirs, and made to conceal all but the eyes, or to discover the whole face, at the pleasure of the wearer.

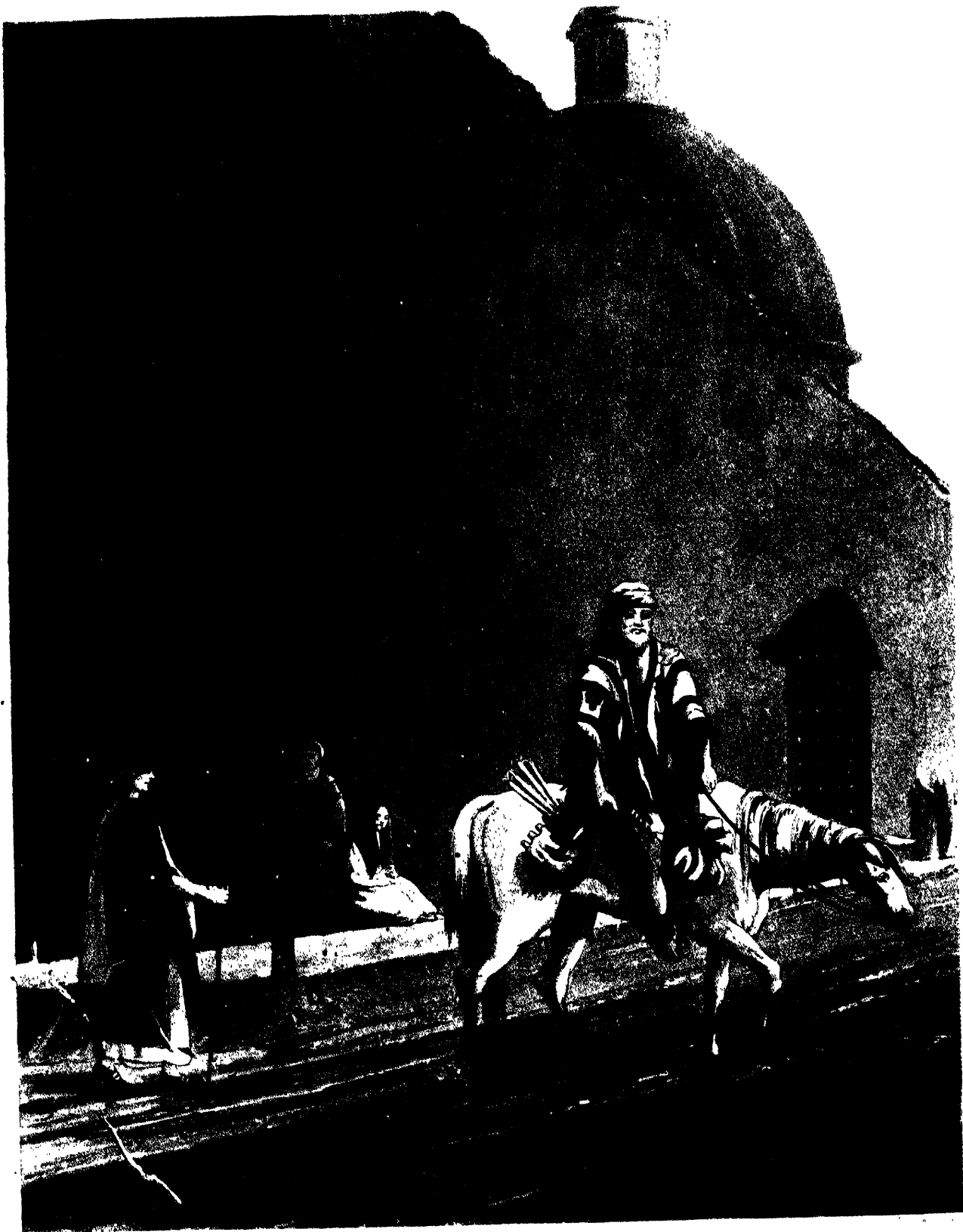
In cold weather, or when they pay visits at night, they use the *rebozo*, which is a piece of cloth a yard wide, as long as the mantilla, and worn in the same manner. The *mantilla* belongs exclusively to the mistresses; and the *rebozo* is always worn by servants, whose little vanity is displayed in this part of their dress, which they are solicitous to have, if possible, of the finest cloth and the most delicate colour, sometimes embroidered, or bordered with velvet or satin ribbons.

The church dress has not undergone any change, but retains its Spanish character, and is always made of black silk, worn with white silk stockings and white satin shoes. It is considered indecorous to attend mass in coloured attire. Sometimes a white veil is used, and a little white is introduced into the dress of the young girls, whose clothes, being made in all respects like those of grown persons, give them an air of extreme formality.

The children of both sexes are generally beautiful, but after the age of fourteen years the girls cease to improve in appearance; they marry from that age upwards, and at twenty-five few retain any appearance of youth.

The mode of salutation among the ladies in public is shaking hands—an honour never granted publicly to gentlemen. It is, moreover, considered extremely improper in a lady to take a man's arm in public, even though it were her husband's: this notion, however, is beginning to be exploded. The unmarried girls always walk before mamma, generally side by side; but even they seldom take each other's arm.

The ladies of Buenos Ayres wear for ornament the natural flowers of a small bush which grows in the neighbourhood of that city, and is very common in the plains of Monte Video. These flowers are numerous, and instead of petals they have silken fibres, two or three inches long, of a very brilliant red. In its general figure the flower resembles a bottle-brush, and at Buenos Ayres it is called *plumerito*.



BEGGARS OF BUENOS AYRES.

FROM the abundance of the necessities of life, and the high wages of daily labour, we should expect to find few mendicants at Buenos Ayres; but the reverse is the fact, the number of beggars being very great in proportion to the population. It ought, however, to be remarked, that they consist in general of the old and the very young.

The blind and the lame, who are always objects of charity, post themselves at the doors of the churches, where the incessant cry of "*Por amor de Dios,*" in the most whining tone imaginable, assails every passenger. Common sense and common feeling are both insulted by the frequent meeting with *privileged beggars* in the garb of a religious society, which subsists by the contributions levied on the public by these its emissaries, who, with a huge sack slung over their shoulders before and behind, proceed from house to house, begging "For the love of God!" Such is the bigotry of the people, that it is considered criminal to allow them to leave the house without a donation.

To a European, however, the most remarkable of the mendicant fraternity in these streets is a beggar on horseback. There are several at Buenos Ayres, and the most notorious of them, who always rides a white horse, is chosen as the subject of this sketch. This fellow has some bread, tied up in an old *poncho*, at his saddle-bow, some beef behind him, and beside it some candles, all of which have been given to him by good Christians—"For the love of God."

Possessing in these articles all the necessities of life, he is now begging for a rial (six-pence) to buy some *canna* (coarse spirit), as a luxury. His manner is essentially different from that of the real object of charity. He accosts you with assurance and a roguish smile; jokes on the leanness of his horse, which, he says, is too old to walk; hopes for your compassion, and wishes you may live a thousand years.

These three classes of beggars are here represented in front of the Collegio, formerly the Jesuits' college, to which is attached one of the best churches in the city. It contains some good basso-relievos, representing events in the life of our Saviour, and a few tolerable paintings, all of which belonged to the Jesuits before the suppression of their order. Their property now maintains this church, and a public school denominated the College.



THE PAMPA INDIANS.

THE Pampas are an Indian nation, thus named by the Spaniards because they rove about in the immense plains called *Pampas*, between the 36th and 39th degrees of south latitude. On the first arrival of the Europeans they wandered on the south bank of the Plata, and disputed the ground with the founders of Buenos Ayres with admirable vigour, perseverance, and valour. The Spaniards, after considerable losses, abandoned the place, but returned and rebuilt the city. Being this time stronger in cavalry, the Pampas could not withstand them, but retired southward, to the parts which they still inhabit. Here they lived, as before, by hunting the armadillo, the hare, the stag, and ostriches, which were found in great abundance, but as the wild horses had greatly multiplied, they began to catch and eat them, which they still continue to do. The wild cattle multiplied in the country after the horse, and as they had no need of them for their subsistence, they have never the thought of using them for the purpose of food. Thus these animals, meeting with no obstacle to their multiplication, extended to the Rio Negro on the south, and in the same proportion westward to the neighbourhood of Mendoza, and to the Cordilleras of Chili. The savage Indians of those parts, seeing these cattle come to their country, began to kill them for food and having abundance of them, sold the surplus to the Araucanos and other Indians and even to the presidents of the Audiencia. Thus the number of these animals decreased in those western regions, and such as

were left ran to the eastward, and congregated in the country of the Pampas. Several Indian nations from the east side of the great Cordilleras, and others from Patagonia, went in consequence and settled in the districts where there was plenty of cattle: they contracted a friendship with the Pampas, who had already a great number of horses. Many of these, as well as of the horned cattle, were taken away by the new-comers, who sold them to other Indian nations, and to the Spaniards of Chili. In this manner they destroyed the remainder of those wild herds, assisted indeed by the people of Mendoza and Buenos Ayres, who also made great havoc among them, as well for the sake of provision, as for the hides and tallow.

The Pampas and the other allied nations being thus in want of cattle, which was their only article of commerce, began, about the middle of the last century, or rather earlier, to steal the tame beasts from the lands and inclosures of the inhabitants of the district of Buenos Ayres. Hence ensued a sanguinary war; for the Indians, not content with merely driving off the cattle, killed the grown men, carrying with them the women and boys, whom they used as slaves, or rather servants, till they married, when they were at perfect liberty. During this war they burned many houses, and killed thousands of Spaniards. They often ravaged the country, intercepted for a long time the communication between Buenos Ayres, Chili, and Peru, and compelled the Spaniards to cover the frontier of Buenos Ayres with eleven forts, garrisoned by seven hundred veteran horse, exclusive of militia. In the districts of Mendoza and Cordova, it was found necessary to adopt the same precaution. In this war several Indian nations were associated, but the Pampas always formed the principal part of their force, and their courage cannot be doubted. The following fact will afford some idea of it. Five Pampas, who had been taken in battle, were put

on board a 74-gun ship with a crew of six hundred men, to be conveyed to Spain. Five days after she had sailed, the captain allowed them to walk about, and they immediately resolved to make themselves masters of the ship. With this view, one of them approached a corporal of marines, and observing that he was off his guard, snatched his sabre, and in an instant killed sixteen sailors and soldiers. The other four Indians rushed to the arms, but finding the guard too strong for them, leaped overboard and were drowned, as well as their companion, who followed their example. It was in the year 1794 that these Indians finally made peace with the Spaniards.

The nearest settlement of the Indians is about twenty-five leagues south-west from Buenos Ayres, but the city is visited by tribes from a much greater distance, even from the southern parts of Patagonia. These people have all the corporeal characteristics of the American Indians from north to south; but they are not near so much debased by their commerce with Europeans as their northern brethren. They appear to be by no means addicted to drunkenness, and their industry far surpasses that of the descendants of the Spaniards; for, to the disgrace of the creole of this country, he is indebted to the savage Indian for the supply of many of his wants, and some of his luxuries.

The two Indians in the annexed engraving, are represented at the door of a store in the Indian market, as it is called, being the south-west end of the *Calle de los Torres*, the centre street of Buenos Ayres, where is a square surrounded by shops, at which their manufactures are purchased wholesale, and retailed to the inhabitants.

Some of their principal manufactures are the following:

1. The *poncho*, or the outer garment worn by all the country-people of these provinces. It is composed of two pieces of cloth, seven feet long and

two wide, sewed together lengthwise, except in the middle, where sufficient room is left to put the head through. The word in Spanish signifies *lazy*, and is applied to the garment as inconvenient to perform any labour in, for which purpose it is generally thrown off. It is believed that throughout the province of Buenos Ayres there is not one creole manufactory of these articles, though they are in such general use. At Salta in Peru, which is famous for the manufacture of *ponchos*, they are made of cotton, of great beauty and high price; but those made by the humble Indians of the Pampas (plains) are of wool, so close and strong as to resist a very heavy rain, the patterns curious and original, the colours generally sober but lasting; though they have dyes of the most brilliant hues, which they apply to other purposes. By the Indians themselves the *poncho* is not much worn.

2. All kinds of hide-work, consisting of baskets, panniers, whips, lazos, balls, bridles, and girths. Excepting the first two, these are generally made with considerable ingenuity and neatness, particularly the whips and bridles of platted strips of hide, interworked with ostrich quills split, and dyed of various brilliant colours. They also plait horse-hair into bridles, of the utmost elegance and extraordinary strength.

3. Stirrups, of the common sort, made of a piece of wood, bent into a triangle, and fastened to a hide thong; and another kind, carved out of a solid block of wood, and ornamented with sculpture. These are used in the upper country, among the underwood of forests, to protect the horseman's feet.

4. *Plumeros*, or dusters, made of ostrich feathers. Of these there is always one in every room in Buenos Ayres. The common are made of the large grey feathers; but they dye the white feathers, which are not near so common, with the most beautiful and brilliant colours, and fastening eight or more very neatly

to a handle, make the *plumero* a handsome as well as useful ornament for the *sala*.

5. Boots, of the kind in general use among the lower class of country-people, made of the skin of the hind leg of a colt, stripped from the upper part of the thigh to a little below the bend of the knee, the hair being scraped off. The bend of the knee receives the heel, and at the part where it is cut off below the knee projects the toe, which is put into the stirrup. They are brought in dry and stiff, but are made supple with grease before they are used.

The Indians also bring in for sale, skins of all the wild animals of the country, particularly of panthers and wood-cats; bearing precisely the same relation to each other as the tiger and tiger-cat of the East. They appear not to use fire-arms, as the North American Indians, but to depend entirely on the balls and lazo for success in the chase.

In return for the articles which they bring for sale to Buenos Ayres, they take back with them brandy, Paraguay tea or *mate*, sugar, confectionary, figs, raisins, spurs, bits, knives, &c. They are often accompanied by Indians of Patagonia, and of the Cordilleras of Chili; and their caciques have been accustomed from time to time to visit the viceroy, to obtain from him a present of some kind.

The Pumpas are remarkably expert in the use of the balls, both singly and three together. It was with this formidable weapon that, at the period of the conquest, they entangled and cut off in battle Don Diego de Mendoza, brother to the founder of Buenos Ayres, nine of his principal officers who were on horseback, and a great number of his men; and by lighting wisps of straw tied to the thongs of single balls, they contrived to set fire to several houses, and even to ships, at Buenos Ayres.

Azara is of opinion, that the Pampa Indians could not, at the time when he wrote, have more than four hundred warriors. According to his account, there can be no doubt that all the nations of this part of the South American continent are rapidly diminishing in number, owing in a great measure to the horrible practice of destroying their unborn progeny. He tells us, that “ the women of the Mbayas, one of these nations of Paraguay, have adopted the barbarous custom of bringing up but one child. They usually try to preserve that which, from their age and other circumstances, they think likely to be the last. If they are mistaken in their calculation, and again prove pregnant, they kill the last; and sometimes they are left without any child when they expected to have another. I was one day in company with several of these women and their husbands, and reproached the latter severely for suffering their wives to sacrifice their own offspring, and thus to exterminate their nation, since they must know that in this way each couple produced but one child. They replied with a smile, that men had no right to interfere in the affairs of women. I then addressed the females in the strongest terms, and after my harangue, to which they paid very little attention, one of them said, ‘ When we have children at the full time, it disfigures and makes us look old, and you men do not like us the better for that. Then again, it is so troublesome to nurse children, and carry them about with us in our long excursions, during which we are often in want of necessaries, that we have resolved to get rid of them as soon as we find ourselves pregnant.’ ”

The same writer also says, that the women of the Guanas destroy most of their female children. When they find themselves near their delivery, they repair alone to some secluded spot in the country, and when the child is born, make a hole and bury it alive; after which they quietly return home. Of

course the excuse of the women of Mbayas, that it disfigures them by spoiling their shapes, and making them less acceptable to their husbands, will not apply here; for the mothers of the Guanas wait until their shape is spoiled before they think of destroying their progeny. The Spaniards have often offered to these women when pregnant, money, trinkets, and other things, to induce them to give them their children, or at least to preserve their lives, but without success: they would never listen to the proposal, but, on the contrary, took all the necessary measures for executing their design as secretly as possible, and without interruption. In this manner they despatch nearly one half of their children, taking care to keep more males than females, in order, as they say, that the latter may be in the greater request and more happy.

In this manner, more than by their wars with the Spaniards, the strong and warlike nation of the Guaycurus, remarkable for its stature, has been exterminated to a single man, six feet seven inches high, and of the finest proportions, who, when Azara was in this country, was living, with his three wives, for the sake of society among the Tobas. "What a pity," observes this writer, "to see the finest races of men in the world thus exterminate themselves! And it is still more deplorable, that I cannot conceive how this can be prevented. I imagined that the love of fathers, and still more of mothers, for their offspring, was implanted in the human breast by Nature herself, and that there was not a living creature but possessed it in a supreme degree: these Indians, however, demonstrate that even this rule is not without its exceptions."

Whatever be the effect, and whatever may be the chiefly operating cause of this inhuman practice at the present moment, we doubt if it originated in any thing like a feeling of personal vanity, though we know that personal vanity is not inconsistent with the grossest ignorance and barbarism of the savage state.

Our reason for this opinion is derived from the authority of some of the earlier Spanish historians, when adverting to the subject of the customs and manners of the Indian nations: one of them has the following passage: " The hostility
" of the natives to the Spaniards was carried to an incredible extreme: if subdued themselves, they were resolved that they would not leave behind them
" a race of slaves to a foreign usurping power, and it actually became a part of
" their religion to destroy their progeny to a very considerable extent: in some
" cases, fathers and mothers put an end to their whole race, under a mistaken
" sense of patriotism." If this be true, it is rather singular that Azara should not have heard of it, because a religious excuse is one that is most easily assigned, and longest continues; yet, even at this distant day, the natives might have some scruple in avowing the real motive for their cruelty.



THE CUSTOM-HOUSE AT BUENOS AYRES.

NOTWITHSTANDING the vast trade carried on for many years at Buenos Ayres, the mode of shipping and discharging goods is still as rude as possible. It is true, that, without very great expense, no means could be adopted for loading vessels direct from wharfs; but the access of carts to the craft might be greatly facilitated.

In this view is exhibited the miserable and dangerous mode of shipping and discharging goods. The bank of the river at the Custom-House is not above twelve feet high; this might at a very trifling cost be completely paved, so as to secure at all times an easy communication with the beach below by a hard inclined plane. Notwithstanding the evident utility of so simple a contrivance, the only descent is by a deep-worn way, broad enough for one cart only at a time, and so steep that a loaded cart would inevitably overpower the horses, were it not for the assistance of a man behind, who, having hitched his lazo over the tail-bar of the vehicle, then lowers it with the help of the horses gradually down the bank; and when it is at the bottom, by a dexterous jerk detaches the lazo, coils it up quickly, and is ready for the next cart that has to descend.

From the nature of the river, as described on a preceding occasion, great numbers of carts are required to convey the cargoes of the shipping to and from the river craft; and in this business the drivers manifest great intelligence and

adroitness, joined to no small portion of knavery; for such articles as can be easily purloined, commonly disappear in the transit from the craft to the shore (or, *vice versa*), which is sometimes more than a quarter of a mile in the water, besides a very long beach.

The carts are built of strong Paraguay timber, and not a piece of iron is used in them. There is no tire to the wheels, which are very stout, and eight feet high, to enable the carts to go along side the craft: but this cannot prevent great damage from wet; and in bad weather, the working of the carts is altogether impracticable.

The method of harnessing is very remarkable. Hide thongs attached to the pole of the cart are passed through the iron rings in the girth of each horse, which is drawn excessively tight, so as almost to pinch the poor beast into the shape of a wasp; and by this alone, without collar or trace, the small, active, and ill-used animals are made to draw these unwieldy machines through such ways as would baffle the best horses and carriages of Europe. Sometimes, indeed, a whole cargo, cart and all, meet with an overthrow; but that is a mere trifle with these men of expedient.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that, with such a mode of harnessing, hard work, little food, and less care, they quickly destroy a generation of horses; which, however, are so easily replaced, that their loss seems not to affect their owners sufficiently to induce them to try a change of system.

It is but right to add, that since the annexed view was taken, a narrow paved way has been constructed within the yard of the Custom-House, which will in some degree remove the difficulty complained of in the preceding observations.

GENERAL VIEW OF BUENOS AYRES,

FROM THE PLAZA DE TOROS.

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IN this view is shewn the whole breadth of the city from the river side to the country suburb. The point of station is interesting.

A little on the left is the Plaza de Toros, an amphitheatre, so named from its being the place where the bull-fights are held. It is situated at the north end of the city, in a large open area, which serves as a parade for troops, whose barracks are on the left, the white house being the commandant's quarters. Public executions also take place here. The Plaza is nevertheless the centre of attraction, at least once every week during the summer; for though the ladies have ceased to attend the bull-fights so much as they did formerly, they still shew themselves in the Plaza, and the streets leading to it, on the days of combat.

The bull-fights are held regularly every Sunday, and on other holidays, during the summer. The amphitheatre is of brick, having boxes all round the upper part for the reception of the higher classes, and beneath them a circular range of steps down to six feet of the area within, from which it is divided by a very strong planked fence, with numerous small door-ways, only wide enough to admit a man, through which the bull-fighters run when closely pursued. Nothing can be more wretched than these exhibitions, in which great brutality is

always displayed, sometimes mixed with a little address. Three rials per head is the price of admission, from which the government, for whose benefit these barbarous diversions are carried on, must derive a considerable revenue.

It was to this flank of the city that Sir Samuel Auchmuty's division of the troops under General Whitelocke, having crossed the country suburb, forced their way; and here they found the amphitheatre garrisoned with musketry, and every house round the area, being flat-roofed, a separate fortress. In spite of every resistance, they succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in forcing the amphitheatre, which at night became Whitelocke's head-quarters, where he signed his disgraceful convention with Liniers. The walls still bear the marks of innumerable musket-balls.

At the north angle of the area is the house where the British suffered so much in their advance, merely from a few *gauchos* posted on its roof, and they were necessitated to storm it before they could in any way approach the Plaza.

The house on which the figures are seen, is also a subject of interest. It is an old building with *altos* (a second story), an uncommon circumstance out of the city, and was formerly the residence of the chief of the British factory established here for the supply of these provinces with African slaves. The Assiento, or contract for the supply of the Spanish colonies, originally granted to France in 1702, was transferred in 1713, by the treaty of Utrecht, to England; and the South Sea Company engaged to furnish annually at least four thousand eight hundred Negroes during the succeeding thirty years, for which time their contract was to continue. They were limited to that number for the five last years of their term, but allowed for the first twenty-five years to introduce as many as they could dispose of. The same company was also authorized to

establish factories for the sale of their Negroes at Carthagena, Panama, Vera Cruz, and Buenos Ayres. On the Rio de la Plata they were even empowered to take lands on leases in the neighbourhood of their factories, and to cultivate them either by imported Negroes or hired Indians. The hostilities which broke out between Great Britain and Spain in 1739, in consequence of acts of unjustifiable violence committed by subjects of the latter in their attempts to check the contraband trade with her colonies, put an end to the enjoyment of the Assiento trade by the South Sea Company. At the peace of Aix la Chapelle in 1748, this trade was restored to the English, but the company was induced by an indemnification to give up the four remaining years of its term.

At Buenos Ayres, however, the British factory for the supply of Negroes was continued, under the cover of a Spanish name, by the wealth and enterprise of Robert Mayne, an eminent London merchant, whose family have till lately held a distinguished place among the merchants of Cadiz. Owing, at length, to the dishonesty or negligence of his agents at Buenos Ayres, the trade declined, losses accrued, till in 1752 he was compelled to relinquish his establishment, and the supply of Negroes fell into other hands.

Some of the buildings for the slaves still remain as stables and outhouses. Here the establishment was kept separate from the city, being walled round. The slaves were landed on the beach, immediately under the rear of the house; and the entrance-gate to the factory still remains adjoining to the beach-road, though the walls have disappeared.

Since the annexed view was taken, during the directorship of General Rondeau, to his honour be it recorded, the inhuman sport of bull-fighting was suppressed, and the amphitheatre demolished.

This, however, was not done without giving considerable offence to a large body of the inhabitants of Buenos Ayres, although the amusement was not only brutal in itself, but frequently attended by serious accidents. In one instance, in the year 1793, no less than fifteen persons were killed and wounded by the falling of a part of the railed scaffolding. Had General Rondeau introduced any species of public diversion in their stead, the abolition of the bull-fights would have been attended with less dissatisfaction: it, however, subsided without any disagreeable consequences.



TRAVELLERS AT A PÚLPERIA.

THIS plate represents a country public-house about five leagues south-west of Buenos Ayres. Before we reach this place the limits of cultivation are passed, and as far as the eye can reach, nothing but plain is to be seen.

The *pulperias* are most miserable, dirty hovels, where may be bought a little *canna*, or spirit distilled from the sugar-cane, cigars, salt, onions perhaps, and so near the city bread, but farther in the interior, this last article is not to be procured; so that the traveller, unless he carry bread with him, must live, like the country-people, on beef alone.

These huts have two rooms, one serving as a shop, the other for a lodging-room. They are generally built on a rising ground, and have a piece of coloured stuff hung out on a bamboo by way of sign. They are also the post-houses, having some dozens of horses grazing in the bottom near them. When a traveller arrives, he leaves his horse here; the host, provided with a lazo, sallies out upon his nag, which is always standing ready at the back of his den, to the marsh, where the troop feeds, and catching one, brings him in, shifts the saddle to his back, and whether he be rough or smooth paced, away goes the traveller at a gallop four or five leagues farther to the next station.

Here we have occasion to observe the indolent character of the creoles. The bones in the fore-ground are the remains of some over-ridden animal which has dropped before the door. Here it has died and decayed under the very nose of the host, without any attempt on his part to remove the nuisance. Such spectacles, however, are not confined to the post-houses: at all the principal avenues to the city the stranger's feelings are shocked, and his eye offended, by the carcasses of over-worked horses, which have been turned loose by their riders on reaching the suburb. Here they drop and die in the road, presenting a hideous spectacle, and becoming, especially in the summer months, an intolerable nuisance to a foreigner, as it is not uncommon to pass three or four such carcasses in the first mile from the city on any of the much-frequented avenues.

A horse may be bought for three dollars, the cost of two or three days keep in the city: no wonder then that while serviceable, he is abused by a barbarous rider, and when chargeable, abandoned. It is by no means unusual, according to the undisputed evidence of persons who have resided long in the country, for travellers across the Pampas to leave their horses behind them on the road to starve and die, when they are no longer of use, either from fatigue or the badness of the ways.

The countrymen represented in the annexed sketch, are met on their way to and from the country, of *campo*, as they call it, signifying the uncultivated plain. The man on the left has coiled his lazo over his horse's neck, for convenience of carriage; his balls and knife are in his girdle; his *poncho* is on the horse's back, and between it and the saddle, he carries a stock of raw beef for his journey, parts of which project from beneath the crupper. We should imagine that in the hot months, after a hard day's ride, it can require but little

cooking. Filthy as this custom may appear to us, it is universal among the *gauchos* (country-people) of these provinces. The same practice is known to prevail also among some of the Tartar tribes in the interior of Asia; but these savages, for they deserve no better name, do actually in many cases eat their meat, whether the flesh of horses, dogs, or oxen; with no more dressing than it receives from the heat of the horse's back produced by the weight of the saddle and the Tartar upon it.

The *pulperias* are the rendezvous of the country-people, who set no value upon money, and spend it only in gambling and drinking. Their custom is to invite all present to drink with them; they have a large pitcher full of cane-spirit (for they dislike wine), which they pass round. This ceremony they repeat so long as they have a penny left, and they consider it as an affront if any one declines the invitation. Every *pulperia* is provided with a guitar, and whoever plays on it is treated at the expense of the company. These musicians never sing any other than *yarábys*, or Peruvian songs, which are the most monotonous and dismal in the world. The tone is lamentable, and they always turn upon disappointed love, and lovers deploring their pains in deserts; but never treat of lively, agreeable, or even indifferent subjects.

After all, these *pulperias*, miserable as they are, are not much inferior to some of the inns, as they are called, in Spain herself. It is very true, that in the larger post-towns improvements have been made of late years in the accommodations for travellers; but in other situations, where they are obliged to remain during perhaps the whole night, the buildings are literally nothing better than *ventas*, or low public-houses frequented by the poorest peasantry, and in Cata-

lonia and Galicia not unfrequently by banditti: they sometimes do not consist of two stories, or even of two rooms, but a separation is made by a curtain, the harbour of all kinds of filth and vermin. As in the *pulperias* near Buenos Ayres, they are frequently provided with a guitar, but the performances upon it are the most wretched that can be imagined.



ESTANTIA OF SAN PEDRO.

THIS is a delineation of a grazing farm on the east bank of the Plata, sixteen miles north of Colonia, on the small river San Pedro, and it exhibits all the characteristic features of the *estantias* in general. There are three buildings, one of which is the habitation of the bailiff and *gauchos*; the second is the cook-house, serving also as a hut for the Negro slaves; and the third, being the largest, has in the centre a room decently furnished for the owner when he visits the estate; and at each end, under the same roof, spacious store-rooms for hides, tallow, and other goods, proportioned to the stock of the estate.

There is not a house or hut within ten miles of the *estancia* of San Pedro. Thousands of cattle and horses are grazing for miles round it; and this is the centre of the estate, which, belonging to a wealthy proprietor, who resides in the town, is left to the superintendence of a bailiff, with some *gauchos* and slaves under him.

The business of these people is as follows:

First, at the proper season to castrate and to mark all the young stock with the estate stamp, which once cut in is never effaced. Every estate has its particular mark, which, although the land may change masters, is still retained, so that on many of the *estancias* the same stamp has been used for two hundred years; and when horses are sold by strangers, it is customary to require them to pro-

duce the stamp with which the horse is marked, in proof of their right to sell him.

Secondly, to ride the limits of the estate occasionally, and drive in such of the cattle as may have strayed.

Thirdly, during the winter and the spring to work at the homestead, killing vast numbers of the cattle for the hides, tallow, and *cherca*, or jerked beef. The spring is the best time for tallow, the pastures being extremely rich before the heats of summer, which burn up the whole country. The oxen are then in high condition; during the summer they become lean; recovering their flesh a little as winter advances, and the rains cover the pastures with fresh herbage. The hides are dried with great care, being stretched with pegs for that purpose, and when hard, are folded double, and stowed in the hide-room. The *cherca* is the part between the ribs and the fat, cut off in long thin pieces, dipped in salt and water, and dried in the air.

The sheep are not numerous near the city, although there were formerly immense flocks; but they were then kept for the purpose of fuel. It is related, that all the churches are built of bricks burned with the carcasses of sheep. Such has been the abundance of these animals, that, within the memory of a foreign resident at Buenos Ayres, a flock of three thousand was sold at the rate of a *medillo*, three-pence, per head; after which they were killed on the ground, and there left to decay till the wool could be easily plucked from the exposed side; and this was the only use made of the three thousand carcasses!

Laws have been made prohibiting the use of these animals for fuel; yet such was the prejudice against sheep, that, till very lately, the meanest beggar of Buenos Ayres would have been offended at an offer of mutton, considering it as refused. Even at present it is not seen at the better tables, though it is eaten

by foreigners and the lower classes. In spring it is often very good, but small, the carcase weighing from thirty to forty-two pounds.

Azara has drawn a curious and entertaining picture of the manners of the inhabitants of the *estancias*, and the herdsmen in general of these parts, who are the least civilized of all the inhabitants; nay indeed, their mode of life has almost reduced the Spaniards, who have embraced it, to the state of savage Indians. These herdsmen, in the government of Buenos Ayres alone, are employed in tending ten millions of horned cattle, and about two millions and a half of horses. An *estancia* no more than four or five square leagues in extent, is looked upon as inconsiderable at Buenos Ayres. In the centre of these *estancias* are placed the habitations of the herdsmen, almost all without doors or windows, for which at night they use ox-hides as substitutes.

Each herd has a master-herdsman or bailiff (*capataz*), who has an assistant for every thousand head of cattle. The former is generally married, but his men are single, unless they be Negroes, people of colour, or Christian Indians who have deserted from some tribe; for these are commonly married, and their wives and daughters serve to comfort such as are not. So far are they from being scrupulous on this point, that it is doubtful whether any of these females retain their chastity till they are eight years old. It is natural to suppose, that most of the women who are reputed to be Spanish, and who live in the country among the herdsmen, enjoy the same liberty; and it is quite common for the whole family to sleep together in the same room.

These people never accompany their flocks and herds to the fields, as in Europe. All they do is, to go out once a week, followed by a number of dogs, and to gallop round their respective *estancias*, shouting all the while. The cattle, grazing around at liberty, begin to run and assemble at a particular spot, called

rodeo, where they are kept some time, and then allowed to return to their pasturage. The object of this operation is to prevent the animals from straying away from the lands of their owner; and they pursue the same method with the horses, which they collect not in the *rodeo*, but in the farm-yard. The rest of the week they are employed in cutting the young steers and foals, or in breaking their horses; but the greatest part of the time they spend in idleness.

As these herdsmen are four, ten, and even thirty leagues distant from one another, chapels are rare; consequently, they very seldom or never go to mass, frequently baptizing their children themselves, or even deferring the ceremony till their marriage, because it is then absolutely required. When they go to mass, they hear it on horseback, on the outside of the church or chapel, the doors of which are kept open on purpose*. They have all a vehement desire to be buried in consecrated ground, and the relatives and friends never fail to perform this service for the deceased; but on account of the great distance of some of them from any church, they generally leave the corpse unburied in the fields, and covered with stones or branches of trees, till nothing remains but the bones, which they then carry to the priest for interment. Others cut up the dead, separate the flesh from the bones with a knife, and take the latter to the ecclesiastic, after throwing away or burying the former. If the distance do not exceed twenty leagues, they dress the deceased in the same clothes

* We here find another singular coincidence with the former practice of an Asiatic tribe. George Interiano, a Genoese, who travelled in that part of Circassia called Kabardia, towards the conclusion of the fifteenth century, relates, that the young nobles of the country attended mass on horseback, outside the church, which they never entered till they were sixty years old, lest, as they were constantly engaged till that period in depredations, they should profane the sacred edifice by their presence.

which he wore when living, set him on horseback with his feet in the stirrups, and prop him up with two sticks fastened together crosswise, so that he looks exactly as if he were alive; and in this state they carry him to the minister.

In case of illness, their custom is to ask the advice of any person they meet; and they try, with the utmost confidence, whatever is recommended to them. Azara, who was a military officer, relates, that being one day consulted by an old man respecting a disorder in the head, he told him in jest, to get bled twice, under the idea, that in these deserts he would not be able to find a person capable of performing the operation. "In the evening," continues that writer, "he came and complained that an officer who accompanied me, had refused "to bleed him according to his request. I pacified him by observing, that he "would perhaps do still better to go to bed immediately after washing his feet "and cutting his nails, because they were so long, that in all probability they "never had been cut, and this was doubtless the cause of his disorder. He literally complied with these directions, and got well. This circumstance gave "him such confidence in me, that, six months afterwards, he wrote to me to "solicit my advice for his son who was ill, without entering into any details, and "merely stating, that his complaint was said by some to be a hernia, and by "others a malignant fever."

These herdsmen have in general no other furniture in their huts than a barrel to hold water, a drinking-horn, some wooden spits for roasting meat, and a small copper pot to boil water for making *maté*. Some have no pot; and in this case, if they want to make broth for a sick person, they cut meat into small pieces, and put it into a bull's horn full of water, which they boil by setting it in a heap of hot ashes. A few possess a kettle and a bowl, one or two chairs, or a bench, and sometimes a bed, formed of four poles fastened to four stakes,

which serve for legs, and a cow's hide thrown over them: but in general they sleep upon a hide spread on the bare ground. Instead of using chairs, they squat upon their heels, or sit upon the skull of a cow or horse. They never eat vegetables or sallad, which they say are fit only for cattle, and will not touch any food prepared with oil, for which also they have the strongest aversion. They live entirely upon beef, roasted in the manner described in a succeeding article (Gauchos of Tucuman), and without salt. They have no fixed hour for their meals: instead of wiping the mouth, they scrape it with the back of the knife, and rub their hands upon their legs or their boots. They never touch veal, and never drink till they have finished eating. The ground about their cottages is always covered with bones and with the carcasses of cattle, which, being there left to rot, produce an intolerable stench: the ribs, belly, and breast being all that they eat, the rest of the animal is thrown away. These carcasses attract a prodigious number of birds, the incessant cries of which are a great annoyance; and the consequent corruption engenders an immense multitude of flies and insects.

The bailiffs, master-herdsmen or proprietors, and in general those who can afford it, wear a doublet, waistcoat, and breeches, white drawers, a hat, shoes, and a *poncho*. Their men, on the other hand, wear nothing but the *chiripa*, which is a piece of coarse woollen cloth fastened with a cord round the waist. Many of them are without shirt; but have a hat, white drawers, a *poncho*, and short boots, made of the skin of the legs of a foal or calf: others use wild cats' skins for this purpose. As they have no barbers, and shave themselves, but seldom, and then only with a knife, they generally have very long beards. The women go barefoot, and are very dirty. Their dress commonly consists of nothing but a shift without sleeves, fastened by a girdle round the waist: very

often they have not a second for change. In this case they repair occasionally to the brink of some stream, strip it off, wash it, and spread it out in the sun; when dry, they put it on again, and return home. In general, they are not engaged either in needle-work or spinning; their employment is confined to sweeping the house, and making a fire for roasting meat, and boiling water for *maté*. The wives of the master-herdsmen, or of those who possess any property, are of course somewhat better clad.

As the country-people in general have not a change of dress, they pull off their clothes when it rains, place them under the hide which covers the horse's saddle, to keep them dry, and put them on again when the rain is over, not caring at all about getting wet themselves, alleging that their skin dries again presently, which their clothes would not do. If they are abroad, and have occasion to cook in the rain, two of them hold a *poncho* horizontally, and the third makes a fire underneath it.

An infant is scarcely a week old when his father or brother takes him in his arms, and rides about with him in the fields till he begins to cry; he then brings him back to the mother to be suckled. These excursions are frequently repeated, till the boy is able to ride old quiet horses by himself. In this manner he is brought up, and as he is subjected to no kind of restraint, as he sees nothing but lakes, rivers, and deserts, with now and then naked straggling men pursuing wild beasts and bulls, he becomes habituated to the same sort of life, and to independence: he knows neither rule nor measure in any thing; he dislikes the society of persons whom he does not know, and to the love of country, modesty, decency, and the conveniences of life, he is an utter stranger. He learns absolutely nothing, not even obedience. Accustomed from infancy to slaughter animals, he thinks nothing of taking away the life of man, frequently

even without any particular motive, but always coolly and without anger, because that passion is unknown in these deserts, where there are so few occasions to call it forth.

These herdsmen are in general robust and healthy, especially the *mestizos*, or the offspring of Spaniards and Indians. They never suffer a murmur to escape them when they are ill, or even when suffering the most excruciating pain. They are careless of life, and death is with them a matter of indifference. "I have seen them go to execution," says Azara, "with the utmost composure, and without the slightest demonstration of feeling. I have seen others, who, at the moment of receiving a mortal stab, have not uttered a complaint, but merely said, 'He has done for me!'—If in their last moments they become delirious, they talk of nothing but their favourite horse, not regretting their separation from him, but boasting of his good qualities. When I was in these plains, it happened that a mulatto, displeased at something that a mestizo had said concerning him in his absence, went to seek him, and having found him squatted on his heels at breakfast, he said to him, without alighting from his horse, 'My friend, I am angry with you, and am come to kill you.' The mestizo did not stir, and inquired the reason. They continued to converse with the greatest coolness, and without any elevation of voice, till the mulatto descended from his horse, and actually killed the mestizo. This scene passed in the presence of twelve other inhabitants of the country, but, according to their invariable custom, none of them interfered. There is no example of any individual having assumed the part of mediator in quarrels, or of having apprehended a criminal. I believe indeed that they would consider themselves disgraced by the discovery or seizure of culprits, whatever might be their guilt; and for this reason they conceal and favour them as much as possible."

They have a great dislike to engage themselves as domestic servants. As they are constantly accustomed to do only just what they please, they never conceive any attachment either for the soil or for a master: however well he may pay, and however kindly he may treat them, they leave him at any moment when they take it into their heads, most frequently without even bidding him adieu, or at most saying, "I am going, because I have been with you long enough." Entreaties and reproaches are alike unavailing; they return no other answer to either, and are not to be diverted from their purpose. They are extremely hospitable; they furnish any traveller that applies to them with lodging and food, and scarcely ever think of inquiring who he is, or whither he is going, even though he may remain with them for several months.

Born and bred in a desert, and having but little communication with their kind, these herdsmen are strangers to friendship, and inclined to suspicion and fraud: hence, when they play at cards, for which they have a violent passion, they usually squat upon their heels, holding their horse's bridle under their feet, lest he should run away; and they often have a dagger or knife stuck into the ground beside them, ready to despatch the person with whom they are playing if they perceive any disposition to cheating, in which they are great adepts. They gamble away all they possess, and with the utmost coolness. When one of them has lost his money, he will stake his shirt, if it be worth playing for; and the winner generally gives his, if good for nothing, to the loser, because none of them thinks of keeping two. When a couple are about to marry, they borrow linen, which they take off as soon as they leave the church, and return to the lenders. They have frequently neither house nor furniture, and their bed consists of a cow-hide spread upon the ground.

The herdsmen are naturally addicted to steal horses or trifling articles, but never any thing of consequence. They are also fond of killing wild animals, and even tame cattle, without necessity. They have a great antipathy to all occupations which they cannot follow on horseback. They scarcely know how to walk, and will not if they can help it, though it were only to cross the street. When they meet at the *pulperia*, or any where else, they remain on horseback, though the conversation may last several hours. It is on horseback also that they go a fishing, riding into the water to throw and draw the net. To raise water from a well, they fasten the rope to their horse, and make him draw it up, without setting their own feet to the ground. If they want some mortar, were it even no more than a hatful, they make their horses tread and work it up, without ever alighting themselves. In short, whatever they do, is done on horseback.

Uninterrupted practice almost from their birth renders them incomparable horsemen, either for keeping firm in their seat, or for galloping continually without tiring. In Europe, they would probably be thought to want grace, because their stirrups are long, and because they do not keep their knees close, but stick out their legs, without turning their toes towards the horse's ears: but then there is not the least danger of their losing their equilibrium for a moment, or of being thrown out of their seat either in trotting or galloping, or even by the kicking, capering, or any other movement of the animal; nay, you would almost swear, that the horse and the rider formed but one body, though their stirrups are mere triangles of wood, so small as to admit only the tip of the toe. In general, they mount indiscriminately the first foal they lay hold of, even though a wild one, and sometimes they will ride bulls themselves. With

the lazo fastened to the girth of their horse, they stop at the distance of eighty or ninety feet, and secure any animal whatever, not excepting a bull, by throwing the lazo at his neck and legs, and they never miss catching the leg at which they aim. If their horse should fall while going at full gallop, most of them would not receive the least injury, but pitch upon their legs by his side, with the bridle in their hands ready to prevent his escape. By way of exercise, they desire any other person to throw the lazo at the legs of their horse while at a gallop, and they are sure to light upon theirs, though the animal should have fallen after a thousand curvets. In the use of the *balls*, they are not less expert than the Pampas.

It is almost incredible how well they know horses and animals in general. You need but say to one of these men, "There are two hundred horses (perhaps more), which are mine; I give them into your charge; you shall be answerable for them." He will look at them attentively for a moment, though they may be grazing sometimes at the distance of half a mile; this will be sufficient to enable him to recognise them, so as not to lose one. Another equally surprising circumstance is, the accuracy with which some of them will at the first glance point out the best place for crossing a river, that is discovered at the distance of a league or two, even though they have not seen it before. They never fail to go straight to the spot they wish, without making any circuit; though there are neither trees, nor marks, nor roads, and the whole country is a dead flat, and that too in the night as well as day, and without compass.

From the 30th degree of latitude southward, great numbers of wild horses are met with. They congregate in herds of several thousands, and have a trick, as soon as they discover any tame horses, which they do sometimes at a very great distance, of forming in close column, galloping up, and surrounding

them; or perhaps they will run by their side, caressing them, gently neighing, and finally taking them along with them for good, while the others manifest no kind of reluctance to go. The country-people harass them much to keep them off from their cattle, otherwise the wild horses would entice away all their tame ones. They run with incredible heedlessness, and when pursued, dash themselves against any object that stands in their way. Astonishing instances of this wildness are seen in dry years, when water is very scarce to the south of Buenos Ayres. They run like mad all together in search of some pond or lake, plunge into the mud, and the first that reach it are trampled to death by those that follow. Azara relates, that he has more than once seen upwards of a thousand carcasses of wild horses that had perished in this manner. Another traveller states, that the wild horses are in such numbers, that, being in the plains for three weeks, he was continually surrounded by them. Sometimes they passed in close troops, at full speed, for two or three hours together, during which time it was with great difficulty that his party could preserve themselves from being run over and trampled to pieces. All of them are of a chesnut or dark bay colour.

The domestic horses are also very numerous, and from their abundance most barbarously used. They are forced sometimes to travel three or four successive days without food or water, and are never put under cover. The stallions fight for the mares, which they divide among them, like the wild horses; each keeps his company distinct, diligently walking round, and defending it with his teeth and heels. All these herds of horses wander at liberty in the country, without any person to tend or tame them. The proprietors merely drive them from time to time into a spacious inclosure, and take care not to let them straggle from their own lands, and for which purpose they are collected once a week.

In this country there are also large herds of horned cattle, both wild and tame, which may be said to supply all the wants of the inhabitants, who were accustomed to export annually to Spain nearly a million of their hides. The wild herds range at liberty, and sometimes associate with the domestic animals, which run away with them; but they display less art in their business than the horses. The domestic cattle differ much in colour; but the wild are uniformly of a reddish brown on the upper part of the body, and black every where else.

The sheep are attended by dogs only, called *ovejeros*. They drive the flock in the morning out of the fold and into the fields, accompany it the whole day, prevent the sheep from straggling, and defend them against all attacks. At sunset, they bring them back again for the night. It is not requisite that these dogs should be mastiffs, but only of a large breed. They are taken from their mothers before their eyes are open, and put to suck different ewes, which are held down by force for the purpose: they are not suffered at first to leave the fold, but turned out with the sheep as soon as they are able to follow them. In the morning the owner takes good care to supply his dog with food and drink; because, if he were hungry, he would perhaps bring back the flock at noon. To prevent this, he generally fastens round the dog's neck a collar of meat; this he eats as he wants it: but it must not be mutton, which he would not touch were he ever so hungry.

The wild dogs are very numerous from the 30th degree of latitude southward. They are descended from domestic animals of their species brought from Spain. All of them are of a large breed. They live in society, and several of them will join to attack and pursue a mare or cow, while others kill the foal or calf: in this way they make great havoc among the flocks. In consequence of the great numbers of these animals, and the ravages they committed, one of the

governors of Buenos Ayres sent out a party of soldiers to destroy them. These men killed many, but on their return were insulted, and called *mataperros*, or dog-killers; and the shame attached to this species of hunting has prevented its repetition.

It has been observed, that the dogs bred by the Spaniards and Mulattoes, and those of the Indians, manifest the same mutual hatred as their masters; the former falling upon an Indian whenever he approaches them, and the latter attacking with equal fury every Spaniard or Mulatto they meet.



·BALLING OSTRICHES.

THAT singular weapon, the balls, was found by the first Spanish settlers in general use among the Indians near the Plata, who employed it also in catching ostriches. The Spaniards readily adopted it, as well for these birds as for horses; and no countryman now stirs without it hanging at his side. It consists of two round stones, each weighing about half a pound, sewed in hide, and connected by a hide thong, four or five yards in length, kept supple with grease. The stones are brought from a great distance in the interior by the Indians, who also make the weapon, and carry it to Buenos Ayres for sale.

When it is used, one ball is held in the hand with the thong in coils, which are let out by degrees as the other is whirled round the head. When near enough to the object, that is to say, at the distance of from twenty to thirty yards, the ball is loosed from the hand, and is carried out abreast of the other, which has acquired incredible velocity by the swing round the head, till they overtake the object of chase, when the thong comes in contact with its legs, and the balls fly round them in opposite directions, and entangle the animal. When employed against horses, three balls are used, two flying at the same time round the head, producing greater velocity and chance of entanglement.

The wildest horse of the plains is taken with the balls, which either throw him down, or twined round a leg, impede his course, and bruise him at every

bound, until he is overtaken, and a lazo passed over his head. Thus secured, he is thrown on the ground, an old *poncho* strapped on his back, and a thong of hide, with a rein from it, but no bit, put into his mouth. He is then suffered to rise, mounted by his captor, and broken by violent exercise and the tremendous spur, no bit being used till he is tamed.

The ostrich, or *nandú*, is common on the banks of the Rio de la Plata, in the plains of Monte Video, and the Pampas of Buenos Ayres. It never penetrates into the woods, but always remains in the open country, frequenting the marshy grounds, where a slow rivulet generally creeps along to the great river, either in pairs, or in troops, sometimes of thirty and more. In those parts where these birds are not hunted, they approach rural habitations, and are not disturbed at the sight of persons on foot; but in the country where they are objects of pursuit, they are extremely shy. They run with such swiftness, that none but excellent horses and good riders can overtake them. They cannot fly, and are caught by means of the balls. When entangled by them, the bird is not to be approached without great caution; for, though it does not strike with the bill, it kicks with a violence said to be capable of breaking a stone. When running at full speed, their wings are stretched out behind; in order to turn, they open one wing, and the wind assists them to wheel about with such rapidity as to throw out their pursuer.

The young ostriches which are kept in houses become familiar the first day: they go into all the apartments, walk about the streets, and into the country, sometimes to the distance of a league, and return to their homes. They are full of curiosity, and stop at the windows and doors of houses to observe what is passing within. They are fed with grain, bread, and other things; they likewise swallow pieces of money, bits of metal, and small stones, which they pick

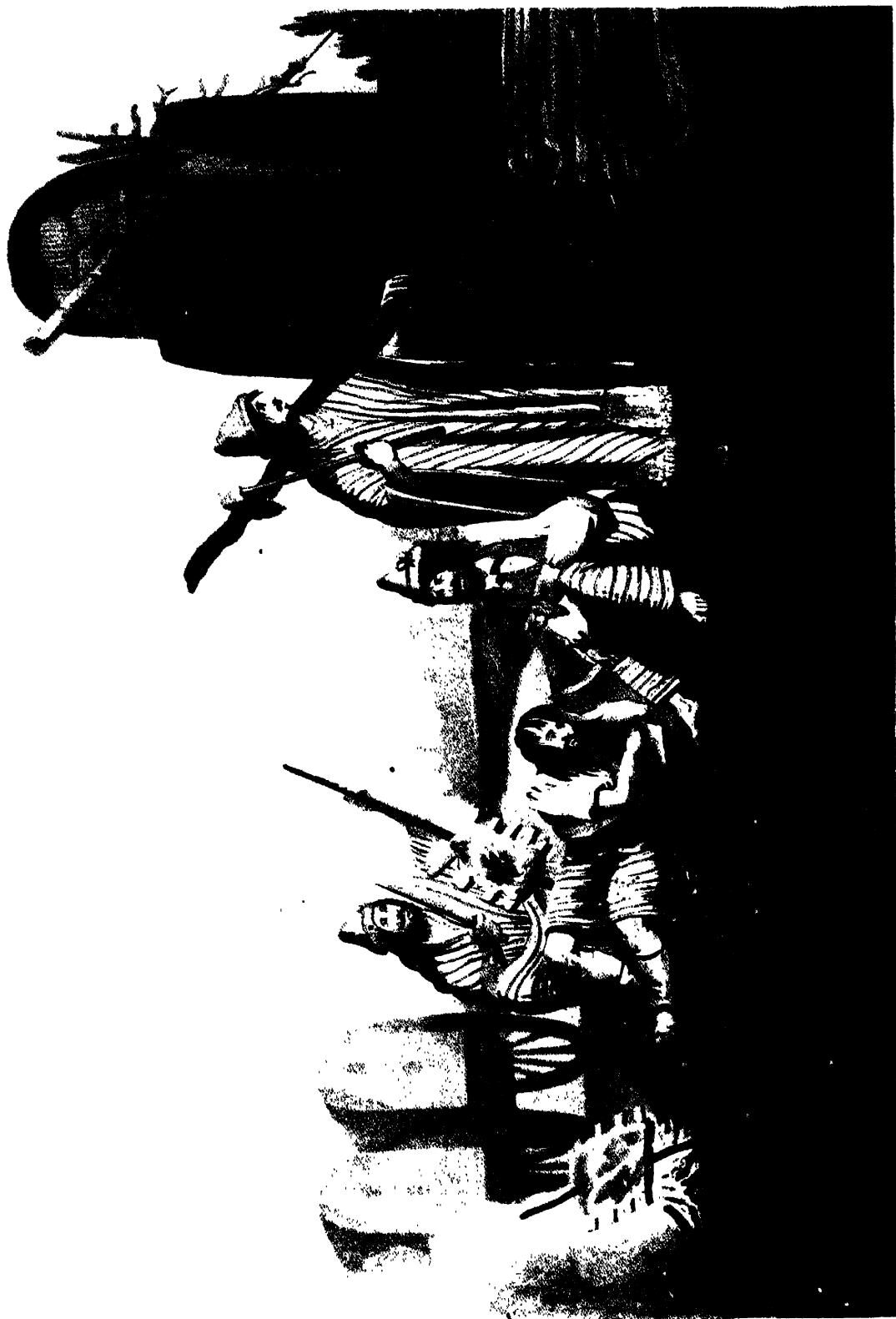
up. The flesh of the young birds is tender and well-flavoured, but not that of the old ones. It is believed that they never drink: they are, however, excellent swimmers, and will cross rivers and lagoons even when not pursued. The number of these birds diminishes in proportion as the population increases; for though it is difficult to kill them with fire-arms, or to run them down on horse-back, and impossible to take them with snares, yet every one is eager to search for their eggs, and to destroy their young.

In the month of July, when the ostriches pair, the males set up a lowing very much resembling that of a cow. The first eggs are found at the end of August, and the first chicks in November. The egg has a very smooth shell, of a white colour intermixed with yellow; both ends are of equal size, the largest diameter being five inches and three quarters. The country-people collect all the eggs they can find, either to eat or sell; they are very good, and are chiefly used for making biscuits. The nest consists in a large hole, rather shallow, made naturally in the ground; sometimes the ostriches shape it, leaving in it such straw and leaves as they find there, and sometimes bringing more. They are at no pains to conceal these nests, so that both the bird and the eggs may be seen at a distance. The number of eggs which they lay for each brood is not known. Azara relates, that he saw a tame female ostrich, which had no male companion, lay at intervals of three days seventeen eggs, which she dropped in different places. From seventy to eighty eggs may sometimes be seen in one nest: these are doubtless laid by several females. It is said that the females of a district lay their eggs in one nest, and that one male undertakes the task of hatching them. Azara assures us, from his own observations, that one bird hatches the eggs, and takes care of the young, without the assistance of any other. It is farther asserted, that if any person touches the eggs, the

bird forsakes them; and if it perceives that it is watched during incubation, it takes such a dislike to them, that it will break them with its feet. It is a general opinion, that the male carefully lays apart a few eggs, which he breaks when the young ones appear, that on quitting the shell they may be supplied with food by the multitude of flies which assemble about them.

The country-people strip off the skin of the whole of the neck and part of the breast of the ostrich, sew up the largest end, and make a purse of it, which they call *chuspa*, and which is capable of holding a large sum of money. Though the wing feathers are so extremely weak as to be useless for flight, they are employed for plumes and other ornaments of female dress: the white are most esteemed, because they can be dyed and curled at pleasure. The smaller ones are most ingeniously wrought by the Indians into coronets; and the quills, which are not fit for writing, after being dyed, are used for a variety of ornamental work, exactly in the same manner as those of the porcupine by the North American Indians; thus furnishing another proof of the common origin of the nations spread over this vast continent.

The total length of the ostrich is about five feet, and it measures about three feet six inches from the extremity of the toe to the top of the shoulder.



GAUCHOS OF TUCUMAN.

ALL countrymen are called by the inhabitants of Buenos Ayres *gauchos*, a term, no doubt, derived from the same root as our old English words *gawk* and *gawkey*, adopted to express the awkward, uncouth manners and appearance of those rustics.

The people represented in the annexed sketch are from Tucuman, a central province of Rio de la Plata, and have some peculiarities of dress and physiognomy which distinguish them from others of the natives of these parts. Their features are particularly Spanish, uncrossed by that mixture observable in the citizens of Buenos Ayres. They are all clad in a stuff of a particular pattern, the manufacture of their own province; have a pointed round fur hat, of a fawn colour; and wear their hair long and lank. In other respects they resemble the rest of the country-people, and in nothing more than in their dirt.

It is customary for the carts, which always arrive in convoys of from five to twenty, to be discharged about half a mile out of the town, as it would be extremely inconvenient to have the teams standing for that purpose in the streets. When unloaded, they are ranged side by side along the margin of the river, until they receive their return cargo. They bring down from Tucuman chiefly tanned hides and tallow, and carry up in return principally British manufactures.

GAUCHOS OF TUCUMAN.

The subject of the sketch is a party that has brought down tanned hides, which are discharged on the beach, waiting for the town-carts to carry them in. Some of the drivers are met to sup, as is usual, in the open air, on the beach, about half a mile from the city. A fire is made of some wood, and of bones, abundance of which are always lying about. A piece of the short ribs of beef, having a stake thrust through it by way of spit, is put down to roast; the stake being fixed for that purpose in the ground, on the windward side, and inclining over the fire. Two or three such pieces are cooked in succession; each piece being passed round the party on the stake, which serves for a handle, and supersedes the use of a platter, being stuck in the ground after the repast, till it is again wanted.



MENDOZA WINE-MULES.

MENDOZA is the capital of the province of Cuyo, or Chiquito, situated at the foot of the Cordilleras, near the principal pass which leads over the mountains into Chili. From this place large convoys of from two to three hundred mules come down to Buenos Ayres, a distance of two hundred leagues, bringing wine, some of which is not unlike sweet Málaga, but, as might be expected from the mode of conveyance, extremely dear. Each mule carries two ten-gallon casks, slung across a large packsaddle made of straw. The casks are bound with wooden hoops, and secured with hide, which, being laced across them while green, dries very tight, and is of great assistance to the hoops. The mules travel in two, three, and four files, tied nose and tail; the leader being provided with a bell. These large convoys are seldom attended by more than three or four men.

The troop represented in the annexed view, are approaching the city in the evening by the Beach-road. In the distance appears the Recoleta monastery, which is a picturesque object from whatever point it is viewed, being situated on the highest part of the bank of the river, about two miles to the north of the city, and surrounded by gardens well planted with olive-trees. It has a small chapel, very profusely ornamented with tawdry saints and virgins. On a large esplanade without the walls, in front of the grand entrance, a yearly fair is held, very much resembling an English country fair.

These convoys always stop on the beach below the city, and the mules are sent up in small detachments, not more than ten being allowed to enter the city in one party, which excellent regulation prevents the inconvenience resulting from the streets being too much thronged; and as there are in general many consignments in one convoy, they are thus despatched in succession to their respective destinations. It is a common practice to tie up the heads of such mules as are shy in a piece of an old *poncho*, particularly when they are driven into the city to be discharged.

The animals meanwhile remain, usually for a day or two, on the beach, and feed on such grass as they find about the margin of the river. They then return, half of them laden with four empty casks apiece, and the other half with European produce.

These journeys are performed only in summer, and long before the convoys make their appearance, their approach is announced by the vast cloud of dust which always attends them.

The author of "Letters from Paraguay" gives an entertaining account of the mode of travelling from Buenos Ayres to Mendoza, and of the circumstances attending his journey thither, in company with two gentlemen of the former city.

"The journey," says he, "from Buenos Ayres to St. Jago (in Chili), is performed in very large and high-wheeled carts or waggons, drawn by oxen, as far as Mendoza, at the foot of the Cordilleras—a mode of conveyance by no means disagreeable. The top is covered with hoops, on which are neatly spread cow-hides, so closely connected, that not the most violent rain can penetrate: they have a door on each side, as also windows to give a free passage to the air; on the bottom are spread mattresses, with pillows and covers, on which you may sleep with the greatest tranquillity. It is the custom

“ to make the journey mostly by night, in order to avoid the scorching rays
“ of the sun, which, on the plains of the Pampas, are in summer most intolerable.

“ We were twenty-two days in travelling from Buenos Ayres to Mendoza.
“ We set off every afternoon about two, and sometimes three hours before sun-
“ set, and did not halt till about an hour after sunrise. The general halting-
“ place is near some water, if happily you chance to meet with any ponds or
“ large puddles made by a sudden shower of rain, or the overflow of some river
“ or brook by the melting of the snow on the mountains, which is the only
“ water you can expect to find in the space of three or four days' journey, and
“ not unfrequently a week; for, although there are several brooks and small
“ rivers, yet they are so far distant from each other, that you are obliged to
“ carry water in carts made on purpose, not only for your own use, but that of
“ the cattle. Provisions for the journey must also be procured; that is to say,
“ bread made on purpose, composed of a mixture of maize and wheat; also
“ wine, and what fruit can possibly be taken, and wood to make your fire. For
“ my own part, I felt very comfortable with my tea or coffee morning and
“ evening, and am well persuaded that this refreshment alone was most effica-
“ cious in keeping the blood cool and temperate; and I would strongly recom-
“ mend it to every one crossing these plains to adopt the same simple beverage.
“ The extreme heat causes most violent perspirations, that in a few hours ex-
“ haust the fluids, and occasion extreme thirst, which the water we have is not
“ calculated to allay; for the water taken with us from Buenos Ayres soon be-
“ comes unfit for use, notwithstanding all the care that can possibly be taken
“ of it, by keeping it covered with hides spread on reeds: indeed we were
“ obliged some days, or rather nights, to prolong our journey for two or three
“ hours, and sometimes more, in order to reach the banks of a river, by which

“ we might halt for the convenience of filling the water-vessels, and to let the
“ poor cattle have their fill, which were sometimes nearly stifled with heat and
“ thirst. It is surprising to see with what sagacity they will scent the water at
“ a considerable distance, which is perceived by their throwing up their heads,
“ snuffing the air, and quickening their pace, so as to make it difficult for the
“ Negroes or Indians to keep up with them, in order to prevent their rushing
“ into the water before they are unyoked: a situation in which the cart I was
“ in sound asleep, had like to have been involved on the morning of the tenth
“ day of our journey; but it was happily prevented by the two Negroes be-
“ longing to Don John, who had charge of two led horses, that had set off
“ together with some mules and Spanish oxen the moment they snuffed the
“ water, when nothing could stop them, not having had any water for above
“ thirty hours. Fortunately for our company, this happened to be a river, and
“ tolerable good water. Here then we halted. We do not remain in the cart
“ at the halting-places, which would be to risk suffocation, but take our refresh-
“ ment under the shade of a large covering made of maniocco leaves, laid over
“ the top of each cart, and extended as far as possible on each side by poles
“ made of reed, or a species of bamboo, which are strong, but very light. This
“ spot was by much the most agreeable of any that we fell in with for the space
“ of seven hundred miles; and in all that course there is scarcely a tree or shrub
“ to be met with: it is one vast level plain, where nothing is to be seen but
“ here and there a flock, or rather herd, of wild guanacos, whose flesh is thought
“ to be superior to venison. There are also beautiful large birds and partridges
“ in vast numbers, as also hares, and wild cattle and horses, who reign supreme
“ lords of these immeasurable wilds, where there is nothing to impede the sight
“ but one vast boundless horizon. The Spaniards might well term it the *Escam-*

“ *radas*, for the sun, at its rising, appears as if emerging from the earth, and
“ without rays till it is some way above the horizon. It is the same at its set-
“ ting, for its beams disappear before the body of the sun is covered.

“ After leaving the river, we journeyed on without any impediment for five
“ days, when our water again began to fail; as the excessive heat of the sun
“ had dried up all the pools and little rivulets, where it was usual to meet with
“ water: we were therefore obliged to make forced marches, in order to reach
“ a small river we should have had to cross; but the oxen soon became too lan-
“ guid to proceed, and by that means we were obliged to halt in a spot, where
“ even the grass seemed to have been burned to the very roots, and nothing was
“ presented to the eye but barrenness and desolation. We had yet a long jour-
“ ney to make before we could hope for any relief. We had but one small jar
“ of water left; our thirst seemed to increase every moment, and we did not
“ doubt but the cattle felt a thirst equal to our own. My sensations in that
“ hour were such as I never felt before. I am now persuaded that water might
“ have been easily obtained, had we thought of digging a few feet only in the
“ plain near to some withered aquatic plants that I saw in great quantities about
“ ten feet from us, and which, I afterwards recollected, grew in the convent
“ garden, and several places about Buenos Ayres. This naturally pointed out
“ a latent spring; but at that moment I must have been absolutely stupified,
“ for I could think of nothing. However, as soon as my recollection returned,
“ which was not till it could be of no service, I strongly recommended to the
“ officer, or chief conductor of the waggons, on his return, to take from Men-
“ doza a pickaxe and shovel, and not to fail halting on the spot, and to dig to
“ the depth of about three or four feet, when there might be every reasonable
“ expectation of finding a spring. I would recommend to every one passing

“ from Cuyo to Buenos Ayres, or from the latter to Cuyo, never to leave it
“ without taking in the water-cart a pickaxe and shovel, as very little labour
“ would be required to obtain water in the like extremity in numberless places
“ along the Pampas, which any one possessing but a very trifling knowledge of
“ aquatic plants would very readily discover.

“ We had been in this unpleasant situation for near four hours; the Negroes
“ were sent in different directions to see how far the scorched grass extended,
“ and were at a considerable distance when the Father Provincial cried out,
“ ‘ Look at the oxen; they smell water.’ We all eagerly turned to the poor
“ panting animals, and saw them stretch out their necks and raise their heads
“ towards the west, and snuff the air, as if they would be certain of obtaining
“ drink could they but raise themselves into the atmosphere. At that moment
“ not a cloud was to be seen, nor a breath of air felt; but in a few minutes the
“ cattle began to move about as if mad, or possessed by some invisible spirit,
“ snuffing the air with most violent eagerness, and gathering closer and closer
“ to each other; and before we could form any rational conjecture as to what
“ could occasion their simultaneous motion, the most tremendous storm of
“ thunder, lightning, and rain, I ever witnessed in my life, came on. The rain
“ fell in perpendicular streams, as if all the fountains of heaven had suddenly
“ broken loose; so that in the space of a very few minutes, torrents of water
“ rolled around us, and the cattle easily drank their fill at the spot on which
“ they stood. The thunder did not in the least affect them: wholly regardless
“ of the warring elements, they drank on; as did our poor famished attendants,
“ who soon satisfied their thirst in a most curious and unexpected manner, by
“ lying down on their backs, and opening their mouths as wide as possible, to
“ let the rain descend into their stomachs with the same rapidity as it fell. How

“ they escaped choking I have yet to learn, for surely there never was such a
“ singular expedient. They then set about filling the water-carts, whilst my
“ companions and myself could think of nothing, but absolutely stood like sta-
“ tues, not even endeavouring to dip up a cup of water to quench our thirst.
“ We must certainly have been what the vulgar in England call thunderstruck,
“ or something like it; for the thunder was most awful, and such as I had never
“ heard or could possibly conceive.

“ The storm lasted about twenty minutes, and caused the most wonderful
“ change in the face of nature that I believe was ever witnessed. Its departure
“ was as sudden as its approach; and in a few minutes the face of the heavens
“ was bright and clear, as if not a single drop of rain had fallen. The parched
“ earth seemed to be renovated with verdure, and both man and beast appeared
“ to have received new animation.

“ We pursued our journey without any inconvenience for four days, when
“ we fell in with a caravan of Cuyan merchants going to Buenos Ayres, laden
“ with Cuyan wine, curious and beautiful baskets made of grass of divers
“ colours, and cups and vases of every different form imaginable, and so deli-
“ cately and closely woven that they will retain any kind of liquid: on account
“ of their lightness and beauty, they are used as glasses and cups, and every
“ domestic vessel of the sideboard. They had likewise some curious furs,
“ ostrich feathers of a most surprising length and plumage; also some Indian
“ armour, such as back and breast-plates, helmets, and cuirasses made of leather,
“ remarkably light, but at the same time impenetrable either to shot or weapons,
“ so that nothing can pierce them. Don John assured us this was the case, as
“ he had himself experienced it more than once.

“ About three years before, on his march from Buenos Ayres to Santa Fé,
“ his company was suddenly attacked by a party of roving Indians, whom they
“ had great difficulty to drive back into the woods; nor did they effect it till
“ he had lost seven men killed and eighteen wounded. After the affair was
“ over, they happily reached a Spanish farm, to which they bore the wounded
“ men, but too late to save more than five of them; for upon examining the
“ wounds, they found that the Indians had made use of darts and arrows headed
“ with human bone, and it being at that time the middle of summer, a gangrene
“ of the wounds had taken place, and so very subtle was the poison, that death
“ ensued in a very few hours. Every one was astonished that Don John had
“ not fallen, for at the first onset he could not have escaped the arrows aimed
“ at him, had not this Indian armour preserved him; for the marks of forty-six
“ arrows appeared on his helmet, breast, and shoulders, not one of which had
“ penetrated more than the sixteenth part of an inch. He had been in many
“ skirmishes with different nations, but never fell in with any so wild and ferocious as these. The armour had been given him by a friendly cacique,
“ but he was a stranger to the method adopted by the Indians to make the leather thus invulnerable. He had only heard that it was done when the hides
“ were green, and that by placing the hide in a trough of warm water, as soon
“ as it is taken from the animal, in which three different kinds of gums had
“ been dissolved, all three of a very pungent nature. In this infusion the hide
“ lies for about twelve or fourteen hours; it is then taken out and cut into different pieces, according to the size of the object meant to be formed; each
“ part is then fixed in a mould made of earth baked in the sun, of the most
“ exact dimensions of a breast-plate, helmet, &c. As soon as it is nicely fitted,
“ and deemed correct in all its proportions, it is left to the air for about an

“hour; it is then rubbed over well with a thick aromatic oil, which is repeated
“as long as any absorption is observed. Before it is taken out of the mould, it
“is well rubbed with a smooth round flint, about three inches long and two
“wide, having one sharp point. This rubbing is continued as long as the least
“dampness appears on the surface; it is then taken out and placed in the air,
“but out of the sun, till it is become as hard as steel. Don John said he had
“never seen any of these to be sold before, as he had been given to understand
“that the natives would not part with any to a Spaniard.”

The same writer describes Mendoza, where his party arrived without any farther adventures worthy of notice, as situated three or four miles from the foot of the Cordilleras. The church and public buildings are very good, as in most of the Spanish towns. A convent, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, has lately been founded and richly endowed by a native of the town, who, having amassed immense wealth, and dying without heirs, bequeathed his property to the church, and abundantly provided for this fraternity, who live in conventual splendour. Besides these edifices, the town is composed of but sorry low huts, or houses of not more than one story, built of various materials, such as first come to hand, and scattered here and there without order or regularity; each having a garden attached to it, in which the inhabitants for the most part sleep in a kind of hammoëk made of net-work, very strong and neat: these are slung either to trees or poles fixed in the ground, so as to move at pleasure. A mattress stuffed with cotton, a pillow, and a thin coverlid, compose the whole apparatus of a bed, that is to say, during the summer, when it is almost impossible to sleep in the house for the heat and the bugs which swarm here, though it might be supposed that the severity of the cold in winter would destroy those detestable vermin.

The neighbourhood of this place presents a remarkable natural curiosity. The river Mendoza, from which the town takes its name, rises in the eastern part of the Cordilleras, from which it descends, increased by many small rivulets, with such rapidity as to force a passage about sixteen feet wide through a mountain of chalk, making a sort of arched cave, the roof of which forms a bridge of nearly the same breadth as the aperture. Immediately under the bridge, about twenty feet from the top of the arch, upon a horizontal plain, out of a smooth rock, rise five different fountains of extremely hot water, possessing many medicinal virtues; the water is thrown up as high as the top of the arch, and as it falls, mingles with the river, from which the moment before it seemed to rise. The combat of those opposite waters on the humidity of the air above, produces the most beautiful crystallizations in almost every kind of figure that the imagination can possibly conceive. From between the larger objects are continually falling drops as large as hazel-nuts, which, resting on the bed of the rock below, presently become petrified, and present to the eye one of the most extraordinary pictures perhaps that nature in all her varieties has ever displayed. Some of the figures are in the shape of pyramids, with points, as if cut by the hand of the most skilful lapidary, and of the purest white. Close to one of these shall be another of a different shape, and composed of as many different colours as the rainbow; while others again, immediately at or round the mouth of the fountains, resemble masses of the purest emerald.

The town of Mendoza annually supplies Buenos Ayres and Monte Video with about three thousand five hundred barrels of wine. The copper brought from this place is highly esteemed. About the year 1740, a silver-mine was discovered in its neighbourhood, which formerly yielded a great quantity of ore, and is still wrought, but it is not known with what success.



TRAVELLING-CART PASSING A PANTANO.

THERE are no waggons at Buenos Ayres; all carriages of burden move on two high wheels.

It has been already observed, that the carts travel in convoys of from five to twenty; it should farther be remarked, that they never travel singly, for, owing to the nature of the country, it would then be impossible for them to perform any journey. As no gravel or stone of any kind, not even a pebble, is to be found on the west bank of the river for one hundred miles in any direction from Buenos Ayres, it is utterly impossible to make good roads. The soil is a very stiff black earth, extremely retentive of water, and the country one vast flat, about twenty feet above the level of the river. Wherever the most trifling inequality of surface occurs, the water lodges in the bottom, which is often several miles in length, though perhaps very narrow. As the roads must cross these spots, and from the scarcity of wood as well as stone, there are no means of building bridges over them at a distance from the city, they become in winter deep and dangerous quagmires, through which the united strength of two or three teams of oxen is required to draw one cart.

When, therefore, the convoy arrives at a *pantano*, as this kind of bog is called, the difficulty is overcome by the united strength of the cattle; but, should it not be very deep and bad, the mode of harnessing the oxen to the cart, which is ingenious enough, suffices. Six bullocks are always used; two are attached to

the pole of the cart, and the other four close to each other, with a great interval between them and the two first mentioned. In this manner the four foremost oxen have passed through the *pantano*, and are on firm ground, by the time the other two have brought the cart into the bog. They all draw by a beam lashed to the horns of each pair with hide ropes, leading from the centre of it to the pole of the cart and to each other's beam. No reins are used, the animals being guided entirely by the enormous goad slung in front of the cart, which, being balanced by a weight at its inner end, is managed by the driver with astonishing dexterity. It is a bamboo, thirty-two feet long, with a small stick, eight feet more, attached to it, having a goad fastened to its extremity. At the place where they are united, there is a piece of iron in the shape of a long pear, terminating in a sharp point, which serves as a goad for the second pair of the team, and is made to act on them by the bamboo being rapidly lowered with the pulley by which it is slung. The beasts next to the cart are guided by a short hand-goad.

No care being taken to keep the hide ropes by which the cart is drawn from trailing on the ground, the smallest mismanagement in a *pantano* may be attended with serious danger; for the ropes, if suffered to be slack, are liable to get between the bullocks' legs, and throw them down: hence it is not uncommon for some of the team to be smothered in the mud, and it is then fortunate if the cart and the goods escape. The *pantanos* are often three or four feet deep, so that the men could not venture into them, if they were inclined. When, therefore, an accident of this kind happens, the driver's only resource is the goad, which he plies most unmercifully, until by some plunge the animal either clears himself, or falls down to rise no more; in which case the rope is cut, and he is left to his fate.

The wood on the top of the cart is brought from Paraguay, and never used but in the desert, where there is neither wood nor water, except that in the salt-marshes. One of these tracts, of a whole day's journey, occurs in the road to the Cordilleras; and every cart carries a large earthen jar of water fastened behind it, as a provision for that day.

It would appear from the statement of Azara, that these salt-marshes, and the salt with which the soil is in many places abundantly impregnated, are a benefit conferred by nature on these regions; as salt is essentially necessary for the subsistence of the immense numbers of cattle reared in them.

On the north of the Rio de la Plata, in the plains of Monte Video and Maldonado, the cattle seek dry bones, and eat them with avidity. Farther northward, they eat a salty clay called *barrero*, which is found in ditches; and when this earth is not to be had, as is sometimes the case in the eastern districts of Paraguay, the cattle of all kinds infallibly perish within four months. It is inconceivable with what eagerness they seek and eat this clay: if they find some, after being without it for a month, not even blows will drive them away, and sometimes they swallow so much as to die of indigestion. We may hence conclude, that the herbage of these parts would not support any species of cattle without the addition of salt or salt clay. In Brasil, notwithstanding the abundant pasturage, it is impossible to rear cattle without salt, which is there very dear, as none is found in the country, and it must be imported from Europe.

Man does not seem to be governed by the same necessity; for, in the tracts destitute of salt, there were nations of Indians who chiefly subsisted upon vegetables, and who, before the arrival of the Spaniards, knew not what salt was; nay, there are people at the present day in the same predicament. These Indians, however, may perhaps find a substitute for salt in fish and wild honey,

or they may eat salt clay when they can find it; or perhaps they have the custom that is still followed by the Ubaya and Guana nations, who burn herbage, and with the ashes, which contain salt, make little balls, which they mix with their food by way of seasoning.

In the division of the country situated to the south of the Plata, and to the west of the rivers Paraguay and Parana, the very reverse is the case. Here the water of every lake, rivulet, and well, is brackish in summer, or when little rain falls; nay, some of the rivers themselves have a salty taste when very low, though their current is never interrupted. But some of the waters are more salt than others, and the salts are not all of the same quality. The fort of Melincuc, situated in lat. 33 deg. 44 min., is completely surrounded with lagoons, which become dry in seasons when there is little rain. Azara relates, that such was the case when he visited this place in the month of March; and he found a surface of nearly a league in diameter covered to the depth of four inches with a salt, which, when analyzed, proved to be sulphate of magnesia, or Epsom salt. About one hundred and thirty leagues south-south-west of Buenos Ayres, there is a lake always full of excellent common salt, which is preferred by the people of that city to the European. The heat of the sun crystallizes salt of the like quality in many other lakes of this country. In Paraguay, the people procure salt by collecting the white efflorescence found in dry seasons in some of the valleys, which is dissolved, filtered, and boiled.

POST-COACH TRAVELLING

THE ordinary mode of travelling in this country is on horseback, for there is no such thing as a public conveyance for a number of persons to any point of these provinces. Coaches, however, are kept for the purpose of letting to perform a journey; but both the vehicles and their equipment are a caricature upon posting.

A few British merchants at Buenos Ayres, and two or three native families, as well as the chief director, have modern English carriages; but all the other coaches are in the fashion of the seventeenth century, and in general miserably out of repair. They are usually drawn by mules, with a horse or a pair of horses leading. The harness is not to be matched, except by that of a French diligence. It seldom fits, and the animals are always galled by its wretched ragged state. It generally consists of ropes made of twisted slips of hide. The wheels of the carriages are also strengthened with lacings and thongs of hide round the tire and between the spokes, without which precaution, the force required to drag them through the *pantanos* and summer ruts would tear them to pieces. Collars are not used but with coach-harness, and those of the roughest sort, made of straw only, for the mules. The horses draw by the side, as before explained, and as shewn in the annexed view.

The mules are constantly driven at a gallop, so long as nature can endure the fatigue; but as the drivers take very little care of the poor creatures, sometimes keeping them out twelve and even sixteen hours without food, it is no uncommon thing for a party who have hired a coach, to be detained for hours upon the road in consequence of the cattle being knocked up.

The most remarkable object in this sketch is the foremost driver, a Chino Indian. This is a tribe distinct from all the others of the South American continent. Their features and colour are totally different, and have obtained them the name of Chinos, from their resemblance to the Chinese. Their origin is of course unknown; but they preserve their characteristic physiognomy, and are as easily distinguished from the rest of the native Indians, as the Jews from the nations among which they reside.

The Chinos are much more docile than Indians of the other tribes, and for this reason great numbers of them are engaged as servants in the city: whereas there is scarcely a single instance of an individual belonging to another tribe being employed in that capacity.

Upon the whole, there can be no doubt that this race is of different origin from the general mass of the South Americans.



SOLDIERS OF THE EAST BANK OF THE PLATA.

THE protracted war maintained by these soldiers against both the Portuguese and the troops of the Buenos Ayres Union, renders them objects of interest. They are, in fact, nothing more than *gauchos* in another dress, and scarcely more formidable for having added to the knife, lazo, and balls, the auxiliaries of carbine and sabre. These two last are generally carried under the seat across the saddle, as represented in the engraving.

Thus armed, living habitually in the open air, sleeping with their horses, requiring no food but beef, for which they drive the living animals before them, leaving a desert to their enemies, these soldiers carry on a desultory warfare, flying before their opponents, and renewing the attack when least expected. Incapable of acting together in numbers, they never present a head to their enemy, whom they nevertheless keep constantly on the alert, and tease and harass, be his force what it may. In short, they may not unaptly be denominated the Cossacks of America.

Mounted on cattle of the most miserable appearance, having always one ear cut off, to shew that they are troopers' horses, they perform astonishing journeys; riding incredible distances in a day upon the same beast, to which they give no other food than grass, with now and then a little maize or barley, for oats will not grow in the soil of the east bank of the Plata.

It is a singular fact, that, with such abundance of grass, no hay is made in these provinces. The animals therefore, both in the country and in the city, are fed on grass, which is cut every day in the *quintas* (farms) adjacent to the town, tied in small bundles, and carried in carts to the city, where it is thrown down at the door of every house at which a horse is kept, at the rate of from five to seven bundles for a rial, according to the season.

These soldiers are represented at the door of a *pulperia* at Monte Video. One of them is taking *matté*—which requires some description.

Matté is the leaf and fine shoots of a Paraguay shrub, dried and coarsely pulverized, from which a beverage is made by putting a small quantity into a cup, and pouring hot water on it. The infusion resembles in taste the most common green tea, and is sucked up through a small tube, with a bowl at the bottom full of holes, to strain the liquor from the leaves. It is in use in every house all day long, and the compliment of the country is to hand the *matté*-cup to every visitor, the same cup and tube serving for all, and an attendant being kept in waiting to replenish for each person.

The cup is commonly a small calabash, dried and cleaned out, having a hole cut in it large enough to admit the bowl of the tube, which is in general of tin; but the more wealthy families have the cups elegantly ornamented with silver, and the tube of the same metal, which is very unpleasant, being extremely hot to the lips. There are some very neat tubes made by the Indians of small reeds, with a bowl of open work of the same material ingeniously wrought; and these are much more agreeable to the mouth.

Sugar and spices, particularly cinnamon, are added by the higher classes to the *matté*, which is thus rendered a very pleasant drink; but throughout the provinces, the weary traveller, let him stop at what hovel soever he may, is sure

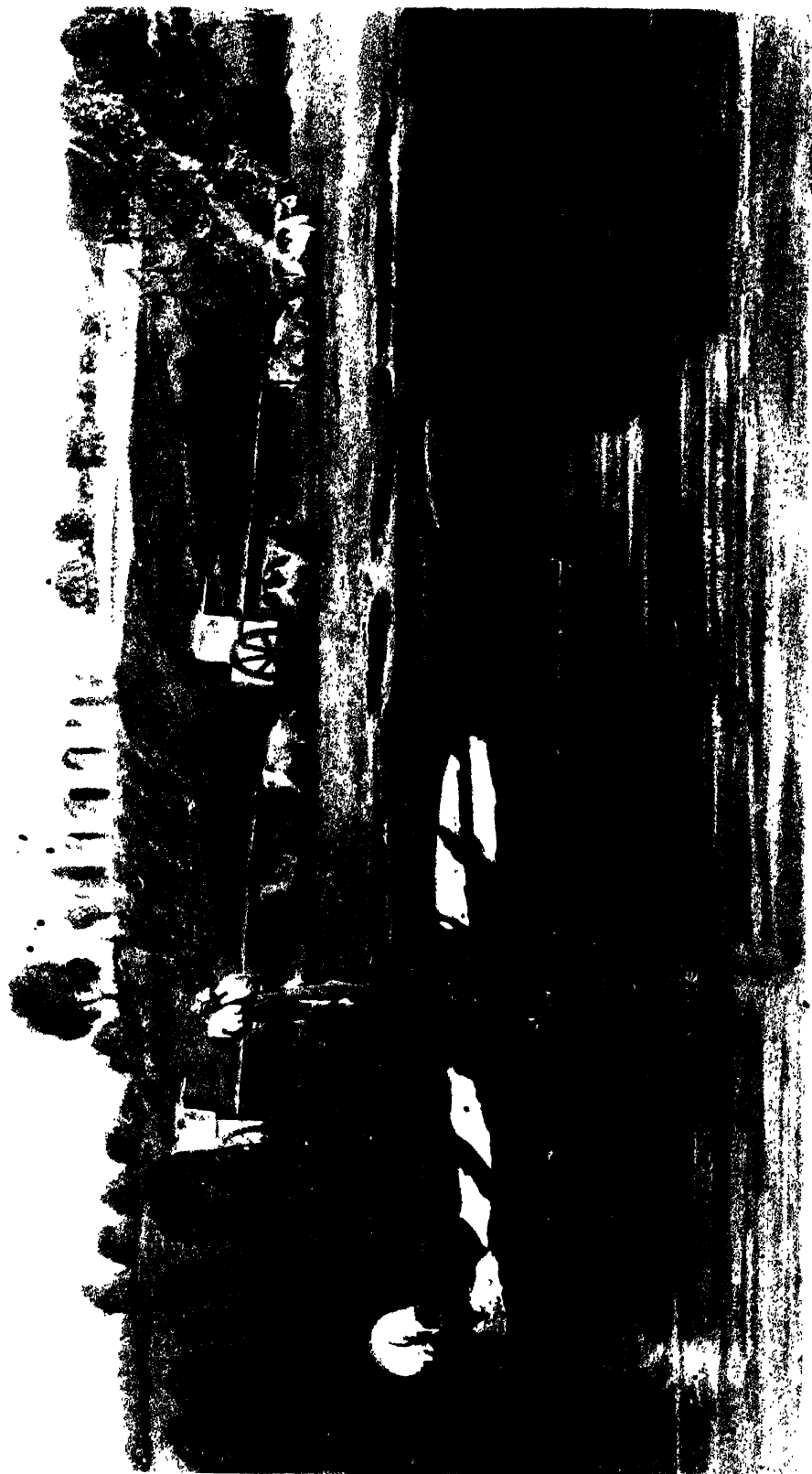
to be presented with the hospitable *matté*-cup, which, unless his prejudices are very strong indeed, will be found a great refreshment.

The tree which produces the *matté* grows wild on the banks of all the streams that fall into the Parana and Uruguay. It attains the size of a middling orange-tree; but in places where the leaves are gathered, these trees have the appearance of bushes, because they are lopped every two or three years, as the leaves are thought to require that space of time to arrive at perfection. They retain their foliage in winter. The leaf is elliptical, four or five inches long, half as broad, thick, shining, dentated all round, of a darker green on the upper than on the lower side, and its foot-stalk is short and red. The flowers are in clusters of thirty-five or forty each; and the seed is very smooth, of a purple colour, and resembles pepper.

To prepare the leaves for *matté*, they are slightly scorched by passing the branch itself through the flame. They are then roasted, and broken to a certain degree, for the purpose of being stored away in some place where they are subjected to strong pressure; for they are not good when fresh prepared. The *matté* is in general use not only in the provinces of the Plata, but also in Chili and Peru. The Spaniards derived their knowledge of it from the Guarany Indians, of Maracayu; and so common is it become, that the quantity collected, which in 1726 was only 12,500 quintals, now exceeds four times that amount. It comes from Paraguay packed in hide, each package weighing about one hundred weight.

The Jesuits planted this tree in their settlements, that the leaves might be gathered more conveniently and at the proper season; but no one has since thought of following their example, the utility of which cannot be duly appreciated except by those who are thoroughly conversant with the subject. They

were careful to break the leaves smaller than is usually done, and to pick out the small pieces of stalk: but these circumstances make no difference in the quality, and many prefer the leaves when less pulverized. The principal point is, that they should be gathered at a fit time, when neither wet nor damp, and then properly scorched and roasted. The Paraguay tea is divided into two sorts; the one called *choice* or *mild*, and the other *strong*. Part of the first is consumed in Paraguay, and the province of Rio de la Plata annually uses about 5000 quintals. The other is wholly exported; about 1000 quintals being sent to Potosi, and the rest to Peru, Chili, and Quito.



A QUINTA.

A *quinta* is a general term for a country-house. Its particular meaning is a *farm*, deriving its name from the nature of its tenure, which was formerly a fifth part of the produce as rent.

There are numerous *quintas* in every direction for two or three miles round the city, where, embowered among orange, lemon, and fig trees, and covered with vines, they afford a delicious retirement from the summer heat, which is excessive, and present a striking contrast to the arid plains just beyond them. Those which are situated on the bank of the Plata are the most agreeable, though in general not so much shaded; but, overlooking the river, in expanse like a sea, and having the most frequented road beneath them, they are much more lively, and enjoy a better prospect than any others.

The subject of the annexed plate is about a mile to the northward of the city, on the very margin of the high bank, which here approaches so near to the river, as to leave little more than the road between it and the water. It gradually recedes as it runs northward, leaving fields and meadows in the low ground, as described in a preceding article.

The style of the inclosures is here exhibited. They are made with a good hedge of aloes, which bloom in great beauty every summer, sending up sometimes thirty or forty noble shafts, in a line of twice as many yards; or with a species of the prickly pear. Both form excellent fences. The aloe is the best for the purpose, but occupies most room.

On the left of the house is seen the only species of large tree indigenous to this part of the country. It is called *umbu*, which is supposed to be a corruption of *embudo*, *deceit*; because, though apparently a fine forest tree, much resembling the elm at a distance, yet its substance does not deserve the name of wood.

These trees grow to a very great size, and in a singular manner, having in general immense bases, abruptly receding at a certain height, so as to form a convenient natural seat round the tree. The leaf is long, of a rich green, not unlike the Portugal laurel; but the wood is of such singular texture that it is difficult to be described. It most resembles the outer part of a cabbage-stalk, and is throughout of the same stringy texture, but without pith, and of a yellow colour. It is unfit for any purpose as timber, but its growth is encouraged for two good qualities—ornamental appearance, and refreshing shade. Here and there a solitary *umbu* is met with in the plains, where again they are of essential value as land-marks for the traveller.

The carts in the fore-ground are part of a range, as described in a former article; and the washerwomen are seen at work on the beach near every habitation.

At Monte Video wheat produces on an average twelvefold, and at Buenos Ayres sixteenfold; but the grain is not much more than half as large as the European: the flour from it, however, makes very excellent bread. The wheat grown for ten miles round Buenos Ayres is considered as being of the finest quality, and yielding the most flour. As the greater part of the inhabitants of the east bank of the Plata are occupied with their herds, or in tanning leather and salting provisions, they do not sow sufficient wheat for their consumption, but import it from Buenos Ayres, or the west bank, where the average quantity raised is estimated at 100,000 fanegas of the country, equivalent to 219,300 Spanish fanegas. The total consumption of Buenos Ayres is 70,000 of the former; the remainder is exported to the Havannah, Paraguay, and Brasil.

THE HORSE-RACE.

HORSE-RACING is a favourite diversion of the people of Buenos Ayres, but it is so managed as to afford very little sport to an Englishman. There are no horses trained for racing, nor is any attention paid to the breed with a view to that object. No match is ever made for more than half a mile; but the ordinary distance is two *quadras*, or three hundred yards, and the race is decided in a single heat. To make amends for this, however, they will start more than twenty times, and after running a few yards, return, until the riders can agree that the start is equal. What we call jockeyship is here unknown or unpractised, no foul play ever taking place, except throwing one another out of their seat, which is allowed, if it can be accomplished; but with such expert riders it is extremely difficult, and therefore seldom attempted.

They ride without saddle, whip, or spur, having only a bridle without a bit; and thus the spirit and speed of the animals have fair play. It does not appear that the proportion of weight to the age of the horse is at all considered, or that any attention is paid to the equalization of the weights of the riders: it is enough if there is not any remarkable disproportion.

There is no particular spot appropriated for a race-course, but as plenty of levels free from *pantanos* are found on the beach, for such short distances, it is not uncommon in an afternoon's ride along the Beach-road to see three or four such matches, which tire the patience of any person accustomed to English racing. Great sums of money, however, are often staked on these matches.

The annexed view represents a race on the Beach-road, to the northward of the city, and the characters in the fore-ground are those of the usual spectators, who are in general pretty numerous.

On the left is a friar; persons of this class being constant attendants on horse-races, and remarked as great betters.

The next is a *quintero*, or farmer, in his holiday dress. Being an *Old Spaniard*, and refusing to wear the national cockade, he is subject to a monthly tax proportioned to his estate; and the devotion of these *Gothos* (Goths), as they are called, is worthy of a better return than Spanish royalty has hitherto made to its loyal subjects: for there are numerous instances of even labourers who steadfastly adhere to their allegiance to *Fernando Septimo*, and pay a heavy tax out of their monthly wages, though they might avoid it by hoisting the national cockade. This man wears the Spanish colours in his dress, which, in the first frenzy of the revolution, would have drawn upon him the fury of the populace. That ferment has subsided, and he now consoles himself under his tax with this show of loyalty and hopes for the future. The trappings of his horse are studded with massy silver; his stirrups and bit-bosses are of the same metal; and these decorations were universal, till rival parties plundered the country, and left comparatively few such articles to exhibit.

On the right, next to the centre, is a *carrero*, or master-cartman, one who lives in the city, but has an *estancia* in the country, whence he derives his supply of horses. He has from five to twenty carts, which are employed in the general commerce, as before described. He is commonly engaged in the service of one or more merchants, according to the extent of his or their capital.

Next to him is a *gaucha*, or countryman of the second degree, having a small hovel, with a few cows, and a peach-plantation, the produce of which, with some poultry and other little articles, he vends in the city.

The fifth is a person of the lowest class, being a *peon*, or labourer. To see him on horseback is nothing extraordinary in this country, where even beggars ride.

All these are armed with a long knife, which is carried in a sheath in their sash, or stuck into the leg of their boot, and which is drawn on the slightest provocation. In their squabbles, however, they seek not in general the life of their opponent, but cut at one another till blood appears, when it is considered right to desist. Murders, nevertheless, so frequently ensue, that the present congress has passed a law, wisely prohibiting the carrying of a knife or any other weapon after sunset.

